

United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for
Reconciliation, Stabilization and Reconciliation in South Sudan

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



UNITED NATIONS
MULTI-PARTNER
TRUST FUND

Reconciliation Stabilization Resilience



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RSRTF thanks the governments of Canada, Germany, Republic of Korea, The Netherlands, Norway and Sweden for their generous contributions in 2021



ABOUT THE FUND

Established in 2018, the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience (RSRTF) is piloting new approaches that promote stabilization and social cohesion as a means of breaking the cycles of violence that drive South Sudan's protracted humanitarian crisis.

Despite annual humanitarian spending in excess of a billion dollars, people in South Sudan continue to face deteriorating humanitarian crisis conditions. In 2022, the humanitarian community estimates that more than two thirds of the population, 8.9 million people, are in need of humanitarian assistance, with the country facing its highest levels of food insecurity since its independence 10 years ago. While the crisis is driven by multiple, integrated drivers that are often mutually reinforcing, endemic violence and conflict is at the heart of the spiralling crisis, with communities forced repeatedly to choose between their physical security and their livelihoods.

In conceiving the RSRTF, it was the intent of the United Nations Special Representative of the

Secretary-General and the founding donors, to truly realize a 'new way of working' in South Sudan; to augment response to the suffering caused by violence with collective and equally urgent efforts to prevent it.

Recognizing the potential impact of more risk-tolerant programming, the RSRTF therefore targets conflict hotspots, where volatile political and security dynamics and extreme hardship amplify both instability

Addressing incentives for violence in hotspot areas, the RSRTF serves as a short-term security and stability measure with mid- to longer-term implications for peace and development.

RECONCILIATION

Rebuilding trust and confidence, strengthening social cohesion, and promoting peaceful coexistence through gender- and age-sensitive communal conflict management, prevention, mitigation, and reconciliation.

STABILIZATION

Restoring security, reinforcing the rule of law and equitable access to justice, improving relations between communities and local and national government representatives.

RESILIENCE

Investing in sustainable livelihoods and joint commercial opportunities between reconciled communities to increase community interdependency, productively engaging at-risk youth and realizing 'peace dividends.'

and humanitarian need. Often drawing on UNMISS peacekeeping capabilities to secure programme locations, the area-based approach concentrates resources and combines the diverse capacities of partners across the triple nexus to deliver shorter-term security and stability measures that break the cycle of violence.

The area-based approach ensures each programme is contextually grounded. Within the unique circumstances of each location, the Fund's goal is to help communities reconcile and end violence, to bring stability to where they live and generate tangible peace dividends that shift incentives and raise the cost of resorting to violence. To enhance the ownership and sustainability of actions, wherever possible, the Fund works through local peace initiatives and community-led reconciliation processes as the entry point.

While the RSRTF model is highly flexible, enabling an adaptive approach to each local context, the framework of complementary reconciliation, stabilization and resilience actions compels the development of

comprehensive programmes able to tackle multi-layered conflict drivers. The emphasis on fostering collaboration among United Nations agencies, UNMISS, and non-governmental organizations is designed to overcome fragmentation and bridge silos. Drawing on the comparative advantages of all actors, the RSRTF bridges political divides and supports communities to reconcile, integrating short- and mid-term programmatic activities within a longer-term political vision.

In three years of programming, the RSRTF has grown from an idea into an institution that is breathing new life into conflict reduction efforts across South Sudan. In this short time, as highlighted by the report, the partners of the Fund have put into practice the initial concept and further strengthened the approach, developing state-of-the-art methods for stronger collaboration and coordination across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. To date, the Fund has invested over US\$44 million in area-based programmes that are helping to stabilize fragile and marginalized areas of the country, delivering meaningful results for the people of South Sudan.



EXAMPLES OF RSRTF ACTIONS

RECONCILIATION

- Build on local peace and reconciliation initiatives (Marial Bai Agreement, Pieri Agreement)
- Strengthen the inclusiveness of conflict mitigation and prevention mechanisms
- Enhance inter- and intra-community dialogues, community peace and reconciliation forums/ exchanges
- Leverage political influence and engagement to resolve conflicts/reduce tensions
- Strengthen existing community social structures to mitigate harmful cultural norms that may fuel violence
- Trace abductees and support family reunification
- Social reintegration of ex-combatants and women associated with armed groups
- Mental health and psychosocial support to survivors of violence
- Support to survivors of gender-based violence – women- and girl-friendly spaces
- Use of media and radio to promote peace and healing, and promote peace education in schools

STABILIZATION

- Increase access to effective informal and formal justice mechanisms and increase service delivery
- Strengthen capacity of the justice chain on investigation, prosecution, case management, human rights standards, gender, and anti-corruption principles
- Enhance community-oriented policing and strengthen local Police Community Relations Committees (PCRC)
- Build local civic capacities for unarmed community security and protection
- Improve capacity and access to housing, land, and property (HLP) dispute resolution mechanisms
- Facilitate political dialogues and support to the national peace process
- Promote political and civic empowerment to participate in political, peace and security processes
- Create conditions for responsive, accountable, transparent, and people-centred governance and service delivery
- Promote space for social mobilization and free expression, media diversity and pluralism

RESILIENCE

- Support communities to exercise nonviolent power and agency through collective identification and prioritization of projects that can help mitigate violence
- Creation, restoration, and management of community assets through labour-intensive CFW type opportunities
- Establishment of mutually beneficial resources that enhance cohesion and interdependency between communities
- Support development of alternative livelihoods (agricultural inputs, training, employment, community savings schemes)
- Integrate climate change adaptation and environmental protection programming
- Increase access to Secondary education and functional adult literacy

2021 was a pivotal year for the RSRTF, characterized by continued growth, consolidation and learning. The Fund achieved the priorities it set for the year, including launching new area-based programmes (ABP) and strengthening field coordination and partnerships. The Fund also successfully launched new workstreams and mobilized additional resources by welcoming new donors to the Fund. Despite the volatile operating context, the ABPs continued to break new ground by rallying partners in field locations to tackle the joint goal of community violence reduction. In a milestone decision, the Fund's Steering Committee endorsed a proposal to extend the life of the RSRTF to June 2026, providing the RSRTF and its partners the opportunity to continue innovating and further building on the Fund's strong start.

Continued growth

In January 2021, the RSRTF launched the Fund's new flagship US\$12.5 million *Community Violence Reduction in Central-Southern*

Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) programme. Under the overall leadership of the World Food Programme (WFP), 16 different United Nations and non-governmental partners from across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus came together under one strategy to tackle conflict drivers at the community level through a combination of reconciliation, stabilization and resilience efforts.

In October 2021, the RSRTF launched its fourth ABP to provide *Locally-Driven Solutions for Social Cohesion and Promoting Early Recovery in the Country's Former Breadbasket*. The Fund allocated US\$10.3 million to an International Organization for Migration-led consortium that will work towards stabilizing the southern part of Central Equatoria State.

As of December 2021, the RSRTF had invested a total of US\$44.2 million through the area-based programme and thematic grant funding modalities, up from circa US\$13 million in 2020. Meanwhile, the financial volume of the Fund grew significantly from US\$39.4 million to US\$61.2 million in 2021 due to the generous contributions from the governments

of Norway, Germany, Sweden and The Netherlands, as well as the Republic of Korea, which the Fund welcomed as a new donor in 2021.

Programmatic consolidation

The Fund's ABP in Koch County, Unity State, came to an end on 30 November 2021 after over two years of implementation. Given the RSRTF's commitment to safeguard investments made to date, the Fund critically assessed whether Koch was 'ripe' for the RSRTF to exit, or whether there was a need to protect programmatic gains made to date through follow-on RSRTF funding. Based on a positive independent evaluation of the Koch ABP, which also identified the need to consolidate stabilization gains and considering new opportunities arising to strengthen the programme design, the Fund's Steering Committee granted the ABP partners a second phase of programming based on a refined intervention strategy and a new consortium set-up incorporating UNMISS.

Throughout the year, the RSRTF and its partners worked hard to strengthen coordination and enhance coherence between humanitarian, development and peace initiatives in the Fund's target areas. Partners in Jonglei/GPAA set up dynamic forums for information sharing and coordination

which have attracted the participation of stakeholders beyond the Fund's implementing partners. Beyond enhancing coordination and coherence, the Fund Secretariat also continued refining its approach to impact measurement and monitoring. The Secretariat worked closely with South Sudanese and international researchers to further tailor the Everyday Peace Indicator methodology to the country context, culminating in the drafting of a step-by-step guide to measuring safety and security (MSS) in South Sudan. These efforts will help the Fund ensure its existing ABPs have their intended effects and remain on track to achieving their violence-reduction targets.

Commitment to learning

2021 was also a year of learning for the RSRTF. The Fund increased its efforts to capture 'good practices' and encourage knowledge exchange between its partners and wider stakeholders, starting with the introduction of a dedicated RSRTF knowledge management strategy in early 2021. In June 2021, the Fund Secretariat convened a productive two-day cross-partner learning workshop with participants from all of the RSRTF's programmes. The workshop was well received and provided the Fund and its partners with fresh insights into challenges and opportunities associated with the RSRTF's unique approach and yielded tangible recommendations for the Fund to enhance its operations.

In 2021, the RSRTF also commissioned its first Fund-wide evaluation, 'testing' the relevance and validity of the Fund's approach. This independent early-stage evaluation provided the Fund Steering Committee with critical reflections on achievements and potential areas for improvement. The Steering Committee's management response and suggested follow-up activities to the evaluation will help the Fund stay relevant in the fast-changing operating environment in South Sudan. It will also help ensure the Fund continues to address the root causes of violence while playing a pioneering role in the implementation of the 'new way of working' and 'triple nexus' agendas in South Sudan.

This annual report presents an overall update on the 2021 context in South Sudan, the RSRTF's programmatic portfolio, financial performance and progress against its key performance indicators. It also features highlights from each of the Fund's ABPs and thematic grants to illustrate how the RSRTF approach works in practice and what the Fund and its partners were able to achieve in 2021. The report further provides spotlights and case studies on impact measurement, the 'triple nexus' in operation, the Fund's early-stage evaluation and learning efforts. To conclude, the report looks ahead to 2022 and the key priorities the Fund has set itself to continue its work with South Sudanese communities – 'United for Peace'.



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Restoring Peaceful Co-existence for Better Livelihoods in Koch 2019 - 2023



**MERCY
CORPS**



UN
Peace



UNICEF

SOUTH SUDAN CONTEXT IN 2021

2021 marked the tenth year of South Sudan's independence. However, three years after the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), the country continued to face significant challenges with a lagging peace process, economic depression and a deteriorating humanitarian situation. Despite these challenges, the country saw some progress in 2021, including the establishment of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, general adherence to the ceasefire between the parties to the R-ARCSS and an overall reduction in civilian victims of subnational violence.

For most of the year, progress on key areas of the R-ARCSS remained slow, particularly with regard to the implementation of the transitional security arrangements. The lack of momentum in the peace process continued to foment political divisions and encouraged military defections, the effects of which were seen to play out in parts of Western Bahr el Ghazal, Jonglei, Unity States and across the Equatorias. Economic hardships, exacerbated by insecurity, COVID-19 and import dependency intensified local grievances related to economic and physical insecurity. The absence of meaningful government service provision in most areas continued to drive local communities' perceptions of marginalization.

While the number of civilian victims of violence in 2021 decreased by 42 percent compared to 2020 (3,414 victims in 2021 compared to 5,850 in 2020), subnational violence remained intense. The worst armed conflict in 2021 was recorded in the Greater Tonj area of Warrap State. This violence was spurred on by intra-Rek conflict as well as violence between Rek and Luanyjang communities. The intensity of fighting in this part of the country was particularly severe and unrelenting for several months. Violence in Greater Tonj in 2021 saw a greater degree of organization in the nature of the conflict, resulting in diversion of humanitarian aid and targeting of strategic infrastructure, including civilian property and community water points. The first half of 2021 also saw very high levels

of violence in neighbouring Lakes State driven by intra-Agar and intra-Gok conflict as well as violence between Agar and Gok communities. Following the appointment of a new governor and the introduction of harsh rule-of-law, justice and security measures, the intensity of conflict

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Fund-level 2021 progress against outcomes and key indicators

179 community disputes **mediated** and **de-escalated** by conflict management structures

69 intra-/inter-community dialogues facilitated to **resolve tension** and **conflicts**



50 local structures **strengthened** and **supported** to further local **peace agreements** and mediate inter- and intra-community disputes



100,000

sensitized on R-ARCSS and local peace agreements (Marial Bai Agreement, Pieri Agreement) and human rights

68 cases, including **serious human rights violations**, investigated, prosecuted and have received judgment by joint **special mobile courts** deployed in the **absence of formal justice actors**

1,964 persons (1,007 female; 957 male) provided with **legal support** and **advice**

410 (75 female; 265 male) **justice chain actors** (judicial personnel, police, prosecutors) **trained**

1
court office
constructed



401

youth, women and men **trained** in
community **security approach** and
action planning

17

women and youth **community
service organizations**

trained to advocate for women's and
youth participation in national and
subnational level **political** and
governance discourse

19

**national
forums**

6,436

(3,403 female;
3,033 male)

250

state-level executives trained in
constitution-making and roles in
implementation of the **peace
agreement**

3,210

(1,346 female; 1,864 male) provided
with **primary, secondary**
or **second-chance** education
including **1,069 youth** and
children in **cattle camps**

16

community assets constructed or
rehabilitated (health clinics, community
roads, boreholes, animal sheds, etc.)



1,594

community members **participated** in
construction/rehabilitation works via cash-
for-work modality (807 female; 787 male)

in Lakes State fell dramatically in the second half of the year.

From the middle of the year, additional violence flared in Tambura, Western Equatoria State, with an initial low tempo in June and July and then an escalated period between August and October. The conflict related to contestation of influence in the area between the Avungari clan and its Azande supporters and members of the Balanda community as well as some non-Avungari communities. Sustained advocacy by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and a high-level visit of international community members led by the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, helped stakeholders negotiate a peace settlement in Tambura. Fighting between the government and SPLA-in-Opposition (SPLA-iO) forces on one side and the National Salvation Front on the other, continued to characterize conflict in southern Central Equatoria State. Finally, a split within the SPLA-iO in Upper Nile State resulted in several security incidents in Manyo after August, with violence concentrated close to the Kitgwang faction base in Magen.

The endemic violence in the country, coupled with increasingly adverse effects of climatic changes, continued to drive humanitarian need. Around 8.3 million South Sudanese – over two thirds of the population – were estimated to require humanitarian assistance in 2021. It was projected that 7.2 million people would be severely food insecure between April and July. More than 835,000 people were reportedly affected by flooding across the country. Early seasonal flooding along the Nile and Lol rivers and in the Sudd marshlands displaced thousands, damaging homes, crops and infrastructure, and further eroding local communities' coping mechanisms. Floodwaters continue to threaten people in areas such as in Bentiu Town, Unity State, where flood-affected people, including those in the Bentiu displacement camp, are facing an increasingly dire situation.

Looking ahead to 2022, the drivers of violence witnessed in 2021 are likely to

remain and may become exacerbated if no significant progress is made in implementing the R-ARCSS, and if subnational violence persists and floods worsen. The continued failure to create governance structures that might otherwise provide a means to fairly mediate the distribution of political and public economic resources will undermine local resilience to violence. While details around election preparation remain limited, the process is likely to further heighten existing tensions. The potential for escalation of violence in 2022 will be further fueled by the deteriorating humanitarian situation giving rise to increasingly desperate populations. Humanitarian actors warn that high food prices, continued disruption of livelihoods by conflict, displacement and consecutive years of devastating flooding, will result in record numbers of people in need and heightened food insecurity in 2022.

With ever decreasing resources to meet these emergency humanitarian needs, there is increasing urgency to deliver programming that breaks the cycle of conflict and hunger. Addressing the trajectory of escalating humanitarian requirements – saving lives sustainably – while building the foundations to reduce fragility and vulnerability in the long term is achievable in South Sudan. It requires an integrated response across development, humanitarian and peacebuilding entities as embodied through the RSRTF programmes.

Around 8.3 million South Sudanese – over two thirds of the population – were estimated to require humanitarian assistance in 2021.

COVERAGE AND PROJECTS

Active projects in 2021: Area-based programmes

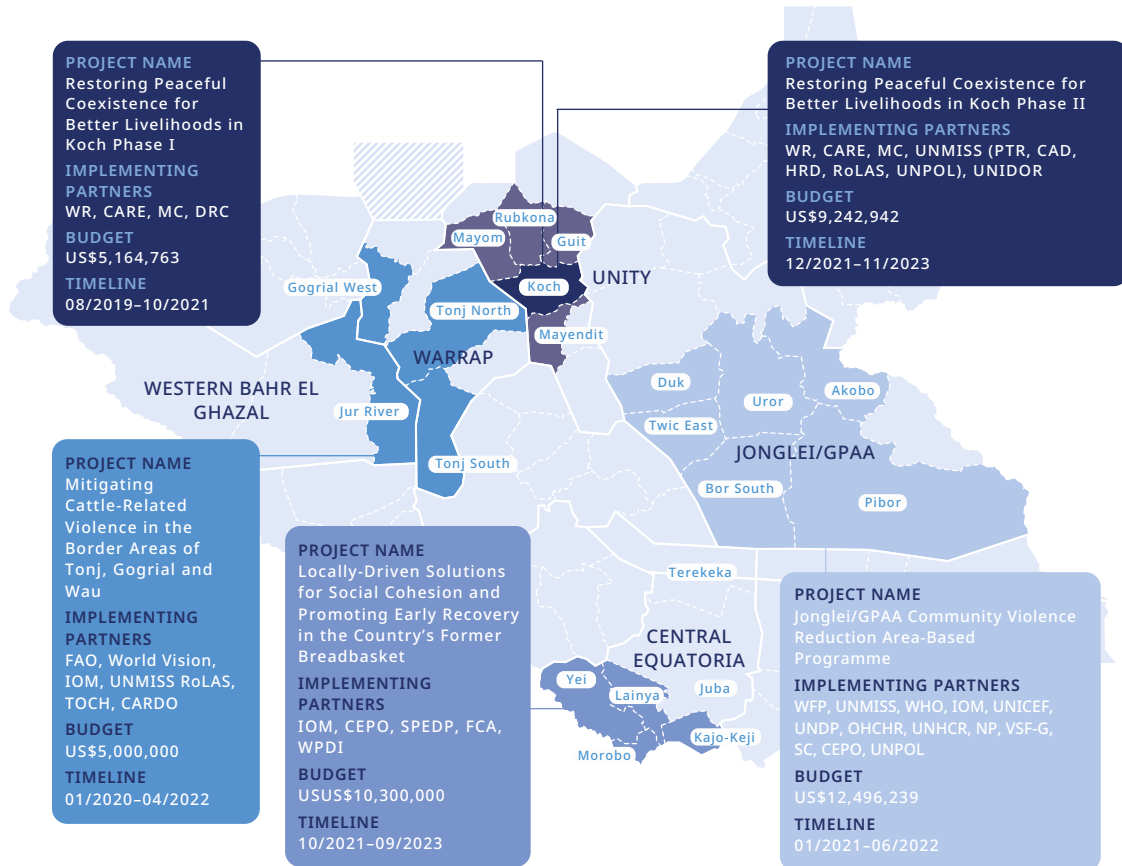


Table 1: Active projects in 2021: Small grants/thematic programmes in South Sudan

THEME	NAME	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	BUDGET US\$	TIMELINE
Stabilization/ governance	Empowering the Grassroots: Linking National and Subnational Processes	UNMISS CAD	629,802	01/2020–06/2022
Stabilization/ governance	Targeted Support to Peace Implementation: Enhancing Political and Civic Space	UNMISS PAD	500,000	04/2020–12/2021
Stabilization/ governance	Promoting Peace and Solidarity in the Face of COVID-19 in Juba, Bentiu and Wau	IOM, CEPO, ACR	500,000	04/2020–10/2021

Key: ACR = Action for Conflict Resolution; CAD = Civil Affairs Division; CARDO = Community Aid for Relief and Development Organization; DRC = Danish Refugee Council; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization; FCA = Finn Church Aid; IOM = International Organization for Migration; MC = Mercy Corps; NP = Nonviolent Peaceforce; OHCHR = Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights; PAD = UNMISS Political Affairs Division; PTR = Protection, Transition and Reintegration; RoLAS = Rule of Law Advisory Section; SC = Save the Children; SPEDP = Support for Peace and Education Development Programme; TOCH = The Organisation for Children Harmony; UNDP = United Nations Development Programme; UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund; UNIDOR = Universal Intervention and Development Organization; UNMISS = United Nations Mission in South Sudan; UNPOL = United Nations Police; VSF-G = Vétérinaires Sans Frontières – Germany; WFP = World Food Programme; WHO = World Health Organization; WPD = Whitaker Peace and Development Initiative; WR = World Relief

RSRTF AT A GLANCE

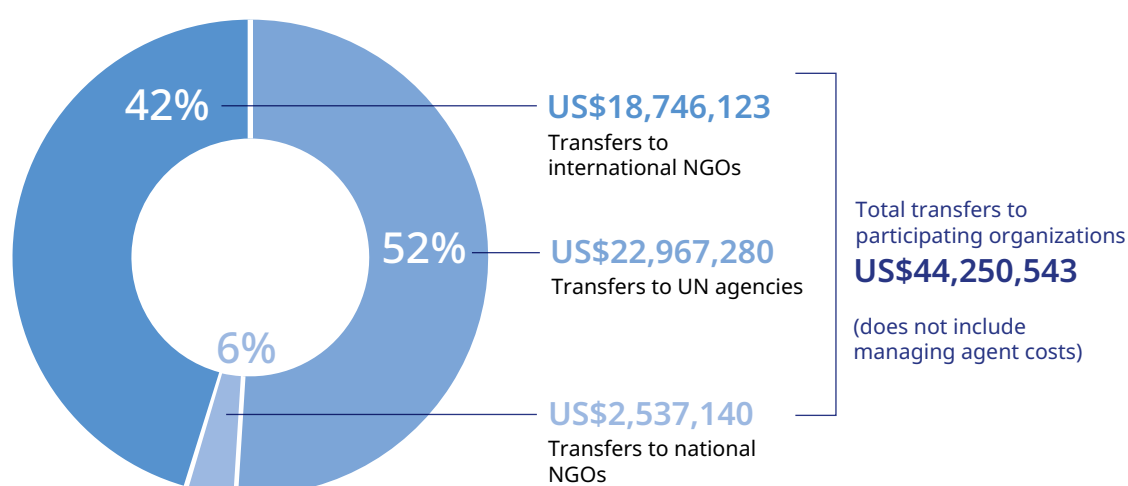
Table 2: Financial overview (US\$)⁷

CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2021		CUMULATIVE	
	COMMITMENTS	DEPOSITS	COMMITMENTS	DEPOSITS
Canada	1,386,957	1,386,957	1,386,957	1,386,957
Republic of Korea	2,200,000	2,200,000	2,200,000	2,200,000
Germany	3,376,242	3,376,242	18,215,659	18,215,659
Sweden	5,511,980	5,511,980	13,626,584	13,626,584
Norway	5,988,024	5,988,024	19,064,847	19,064,847
The Netherlands	6,629,214	3,370,786	10,000,000	6,741,572
TOTAL	25,092,417	21,833,989	64,494,047	61,235,619

Table 3: Use of funds (US\$)

	2019	2020	2021	CUMULATIVE
Transferred to participating organizations	11,211,362	1,000,000	32,039,181	44,250,543
Administrative agent fee	200,939	193,077	218,340	612,356
Direct cost	517,923	403,490	597,265	1,518,678
Bank charges	268	409	369	1,046

Breakdown of allocations by type of participating organization



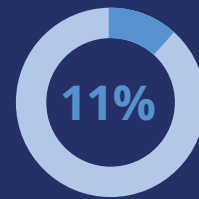
⁷ Please see the RSRTF 2021 Financial Report in this document for in-depth financial information.

RSRTF allocation breakdown per outcome



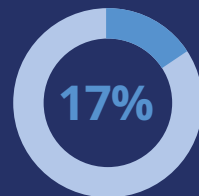
OUTCOME 1

REDUCED VIOLENCE: Individuals, particularly children and women, are facing less violence at the community and local level.



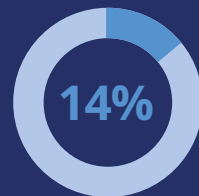
OUTCOME 2

INTERCOMMUNAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: Communities have effective mechanisms in place that meaningfully include women and youth to resolve conflicts peacefully.



OUTCOME 3

ACCOUNTABILITY AND RULE OF LAW: A strong and integrated justice chain offers lawful redress for victims, and trust exists between citizens and state security apparatus, justice and law enforcement institutions.



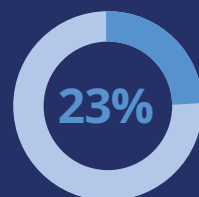
OUTCOME 4

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND GOVERNANCE: Government is accountable, transparent and responsive, and citizens, including women, youth and disadvantaged groups, exercise their rights to meaningfully participate in public debate and civic engagement.



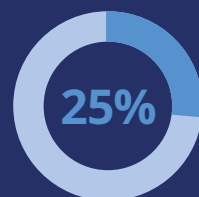
OUTCOME 5

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT: Individuals, youth in particular, are empowered and incentivized to shift from violence and criminality as a means of economic survival to productive participation in socioeconomic processes.

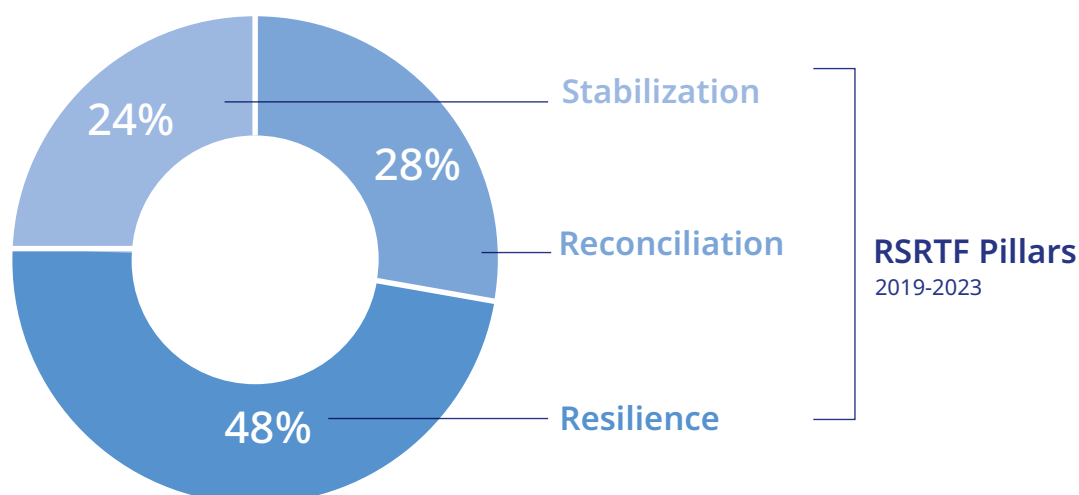


OUTCOME 6

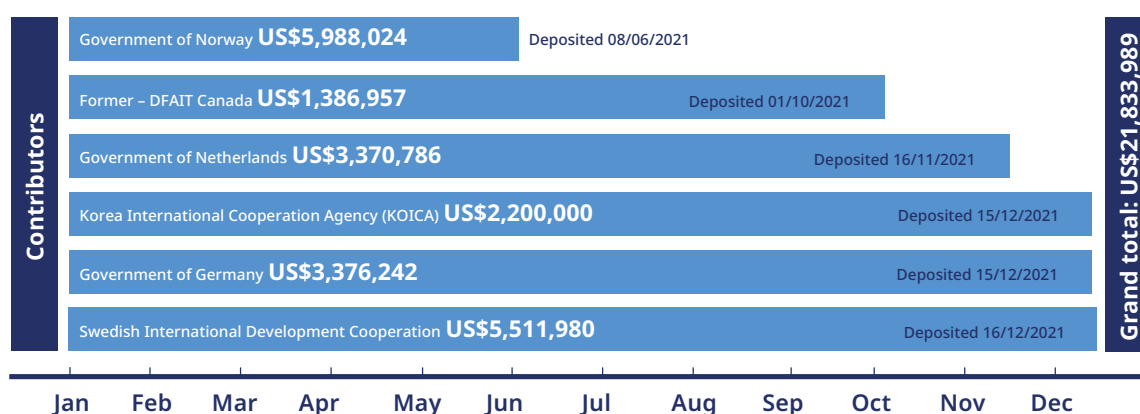
PEACE DIVIDENDS: Reconciled communities enjoy socioeconomic improvements that increase interdependency, social cohesion and self-reliance and mitigate catalysts of violent resource-based competition.



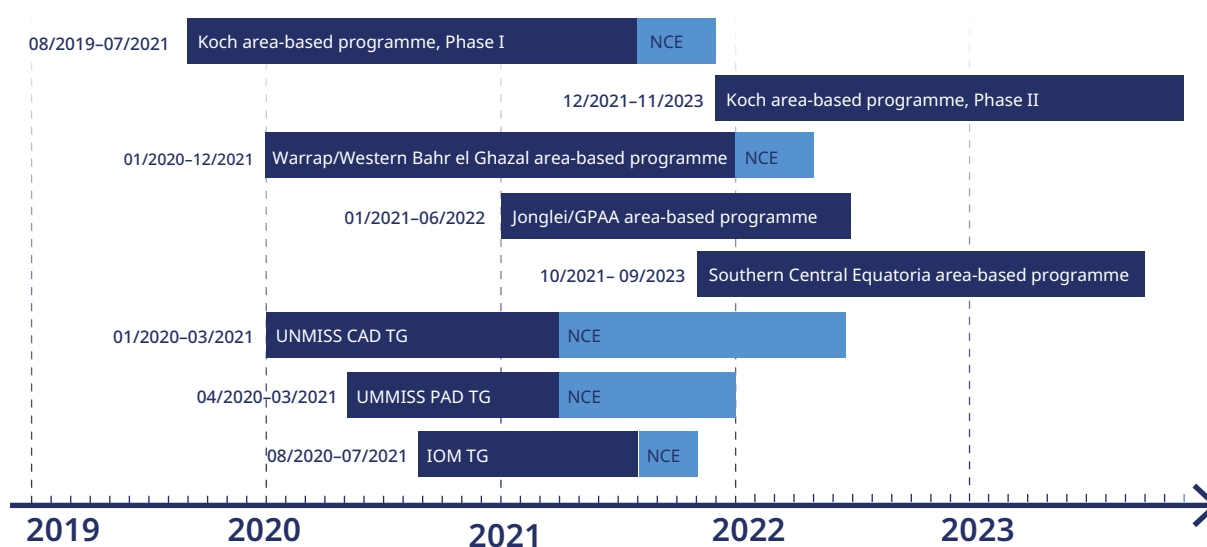
Division of total Fund allocations of U\$44,250,543 (up to December 2021)



Fund deposit timeline (January–December 2021)



Timeline of RSRTF projects (SG: small grants thematic project; NCE: no-cost extension)



SPOTLIGHT: CASE STUDY – NEXUS IN OPERATION

Enhancing coherence between humanitarian, development and peace (HDP) actors' initiatives is at the heart of the RSRTF's approach to violence reduction. The RSRTF is at the forefront of operationalizing the Triple HPD Nexus in conflict hotspots. The Fund's partners are pioneering different ways of linking and integrating reconciliation, stabilization and reconciliation activities, drawing on their respective comparative advantages and networks. While working across the nexus remains challenging, cooperation has enabled RSRTF partners to realize effective synergies and enter previously uncharted territory in terms of violence reduction. In 2021, the Fund's ABP in Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA), together with wider peacebuilding stakeholders, enabled a historic reunification of 130 abductees with their families – a significant achievement and testament to cooperation across the nexus.

Context

Jonglei and the GPAA remain one of the most volatile and fragile areas of South Sudan. In January 2021, and in direct response to the spike in violence in Jonglei/GPAA in 2020, the RSRTF launched its flagship ABP to address the conflict drivers between Murle, Dinka and Nuer communities (see page 34 for more details on the ABP). A major trigger of violence between these three communities has been the abduction of women, men, girls and boys from all sides of the conflict. UNMISS Human Rights Division (HRD) estimates that conflict parties abducted over 800 persons in Jonglei/GPAA in 2020 alone.

To stop the vicious cycle of violence and abductions, the United Kingdom Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund, Peace Canal, UNMISS Civil Affairs Division, and the USAID-funded *Shejeh Salam* project supported a local peace process between the Murle, Bor-Dinka, and Lou-Nuer communities which resulted in the signing of the Pieri Peace Agreement in March 2021. The RSRTF partners rapidly supported this agreement to help implement its resolutions, particularly one of the agreement's key provisions – the return of former abductees and their reunification.

Achievement

In what stakeholders described as an historic achievement, the support from the RSRTF's ABP enabled the return of 130 abductees (38 women, 47 girls, 45 boys) and their reunification with their families. This exchange of abductees has been the most significant organized return of abductees in the history of the conflict between the three communities and has been credited as the most tangible recent symbol of 'peace dividends' in Greater Jonglei. In fact, encouragingly, UNMISS HRD noted a significant decrease in abductions between the three sides in 2021 compared to 2020.

'Triple nexus'

Cooperation across the nexus was essential to this success. Reunification at this scale was only possible because a dedicated consortium of organizations with relevant expertise was in place and well-resourced. They could therefore immediately act on the Pieri Peace Agreement as it was concluded, and help sustain peacemaking efforts in the longer term. The RSRTF's ABP brings together 16 partners from across the HDP spectrum in four consortia. The consortium of UNHCR, OHCHR/HRD, Save the Children and the national NGO Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) spearheaded the return



The PCRC patrol team in Bor South County receiving security kits from UNDP and UNPOL/UNDP 2021

and reunification of abductees, leveraging each other's unique expertise and capabilities.

UNMISS provided advocacy support through HRD and critical air assets to shuttle former abductees between Pibor, Pochalla, Pieri and Juba. UNHCR, Save the Children and their local implementing partners provided protection as well as mental health and psychosocial support services. CEPO provided community and political engagement support, using its unique access and networks as a national NGO. Only through this joint effort were partners able to facilitate this historic large-scale return of abductees.


Looking ahead, it is equally clear that only an integrated 'whole-of-system' approach will enable partners to support the reunification of abductees and prevent further abductions. First and foremost, the coordination mechanisms provided by the RSRTF will remain critical for coordination, information sharing and resource pooling across the nexus.

- Partners' peacebuilding efforts will be important to sustain the momentum of the Pieri peace process. Assisting local

peacemakers in securing adherence to the agreement and commitments to stop the abduction cycle will be equally key.

- Partners' stabilization efforts, particularly in building the capacity of law enforcement agencies, improving police-community relations and strengthening judicial mechanisms, will foster greater adherence to the rule of law in the long run, increasing confidence in access to justice for abductees and their families.
- Finally, partners' resilience efforts, such as income-generating activities, can support the economic reintegration of abductees in the future. Providing at-risk youth with alternative livelihoods will also help break the cycles of violence in the longer term, as pressures to abduct community members from rival groups for economic reasons will decrease.

Without these interlinked and mutually reinforcing interventions across the nexus it would be difficult to conceive how violence in Jonglei and the GPAA, and abductions in particular, could be reduced effectively and sustainably.



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RSRTF EARLY-STAGE EVALUATION

In 2021, two and half years after its establishment, the RSRTF commissioned an independent early-stage evaluation to critically reflect on the Fund's start-up period and strategic direction. The evaluation aimed to test the RSRTF's approach and to assess the extent to which it is delivering on its founding terms of reference. Based on interviews, focus group discussions, desk reviews and an online survey with a wide range of RSRTF stakeholders, three independent evaluators concluded that overall, "The RSRTF has gotten off to a strong start; [as] it is making important contributions to programming in underserved areas and helping to stimulate innovative and impactful approaches to programming across the humanitarian, development and peace (HDP) nexus" (p. iv). The evaluators additionally found that:

- There is a general perception that the RSRTF is essential in addressing the gap between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding funding.
- The RSRTF's approach towards 'One United Nations' across the HDP nexus is potentially groundbreaking and of relevance in both South Sudan and other countries with ongoing United Nations peacekeeping missions.
- The Fund's area-based programming approach is useful and is developing 'state of the art' methods.
- The RSRTF "works effectively and has already shown promising early results," highlighting the Fund's role in supporting local peace processes.

The evaluation also underlined the critical role of the area reference groups (ARGs) in delivering the Fund's 'whole-of-system' area-based programming approach, acting as the main locus for programme accountability and inter-agency collaboration. The report highlighted, however, that the efficacy of ARGs as a mechanism for fostering coordinated action was seriously undermined by the persistent and formidable challenge of getting organizations to look beyond their institutional mandates to work together towards common objectives, thus emphasizing the need to strengthen the ARGs.

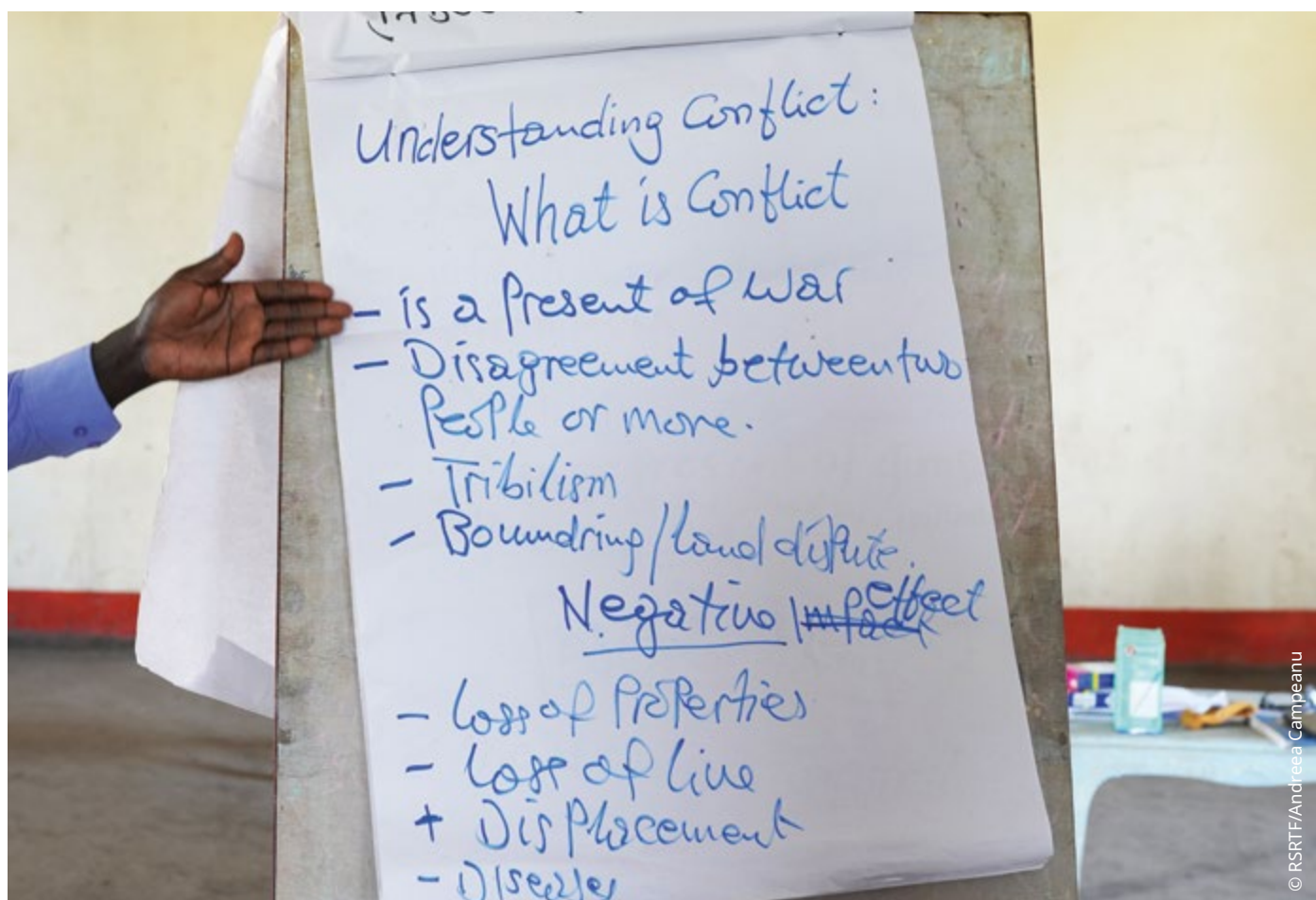
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The report further identified local ownership as a weak spot of the Fund, and highlighted the intrinsic challenges to sustainability if not addressed. Finally, the evaluators recommended enhancing programmatic flexibility and employing the Fund's 'Thematic Grants Window' (TGW) more strategically to add value to the existing ABPs and to ensure linkages to national-level peacebuilding. The Fund's Steering Committee and Secretariat welcomed the evaluation report, including its findings and recommendations, which provided useful proposals to help the Fund stay relevant and effective going forward. In response to the evaluation, the Fund adopted a detailed management response that outlines the various steps the RSRTF is going to take over the next few years to build on the achievements to date, and address the challenges identified by the evaluators.

The Fund has already started acting on the report's findings. For example, to enhance

programmatic flexibility, two of the RSRTF's ABPs have established small crisis modifier funding pots for 'contingency peacebuilding activities' to be able to swiftly react to tensions and prevent them from escalating into violence. To ensure greater participation and ownership of national NGOs, the Fund introduced a mandatory requirement for all consortia applying for funding to include at least one national NGO. Moreover, the RSRTF will commission an independent evaluation in 2022 to assess its approach to thematic grant funding that will help the Fund leverage the TGW more strategically in the future.

Looking ahead, the RSRTF plans to hold a Steering Committee retreat to continue discussions on the strategic issues raised by the evaluators. By adopting a 'localization strategy' the Fund further hopes to enhance local ownership across its programmes, ensuring that participating communities are in the driver's seat of the Fund's activities.



SPOTLIGHT: USING MSS TO MEASURE PEACE ACROSS RSRTF PROGRAMMES

The RSRTF ABPs are by nature complex programmes with comprehensive results frameworks and outcomes that are localized to the area context and to the unique design of each programme. Common across all RSRTF programmes, however, is the overriding goal of establishing peace and stability for communities impacted by conflict. Understanding how target communities perceive peace, conflict and security is therefore critical to assess the impact of the RSRTF interventions and to inform the effective design of programmes and policies that achieve the outcomes they want.

While the Fund tracks key data on displacement, violent incidents and civilian casualties to support analysis of changing conflict trends, such indicators tell us little about the implications of conflict events for particular communities, or what peace means to them. To measure the effectiveness of its interventions in terms of improving overall safety and security in its programme areas, the RSRTF therefore requires all partners to employ a 'bottom-up' participatory research process that interrogates changes in perceptions of safety and security from the perspective of different community members – making them the primary source of information on RSRTF programme effectiveness.

The measuring safety and security¹ (MSS) tool identifies deeply contextualized indicators of safety and security. These indicators serve both as the key data source for overarching performance indicators² and also serve to inform the 'area-based' programme design, ensuring interventions are informed by a conflict-sensitive understanding of local needs and priorities of safety and security, as well as conflict dynamics.

The MSS process contains two stages incorporating qualitative, ethnographic and quantitative approaches:

1. **Everyday safety and security indicators identified during baseline studies via interviews, life stories, focus group discussions and research participant feedback sessions.** The discussions typically start with general conversations about safety, security and experiences of conflict, followed by cataloguing daily indicators of safety and security and ranking them according to significance.
2. **Household surveys designed to monitor the indicators sourced above through baseline, end line and potentially midline studies.** The surveys enable partners to track changes in the perceptions of safety and security among the target community members at the start and end of the ABPs (and possibly midway).

Safety and security indicators

Initially developed and piloted under the RSRTF ABP in Koch, Unity State, the MSS has been rolled out in all other area-based programmes of the Fund. The studies conducted in Jonglei/ GPAA, southern Central Equatoria State³ and

1 MSS was developed and piloted by Dr. Naomi Pendle for the RSRTF ABP in Koch County, Unity State, in 2019. The MSS is based on and adapts the Everyday Peace Indicators approach pioneered by Dr. Pamina Firchow and Dr. Roger Mac Ginty (www.everydaypeaceindicators.org).

2 RSRTF Outcome Indicator 1a: 'Percentage of individual respondents reporting increased personal safety and security in the target area in 'x time period'.

3 The partners will conduct the MSS in CES in early 2022.



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Top: Ranking indicators of safety and security, Akobo, Jonglei. Right: Community Peace Forum calling upon the youth to stop violence and child and women abduction, Pieri Payam, Uror County, Jonglei.



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the interstate areas of Bahr el Ghazal/ Warrap⁴ resulted in elaboration of indicators common to all the areas, as well as those more nuanced and unique indicators pertinent to specific contexts.

Among the most common indicators prioritized by respondents across the ABPs were people's ability to move freely between communities without the need to carry guns, as well as the ability to move with cattle to desirable grazing lands far away. A common indicator given by respondents in Koch, Jonglei and Pibor was the ability to undertake remote economic-centred activities such as grazing cattle farming and fishing far from home. The

ability to move at night was also an important indicator identified by communities. Another common activity used as an indicator for security was collection of firewood by women for cooking and selling. Respondents stated that when they felt unsafe, they moved in large groups so that survivors of an attack would be able to run back to inform their families of what had happened. In Walgak payam (Akobo County, Jonglei State), for instance, women reported that only men could now collect firewood in the forest.

The possibility of social activities, especially night-time social gatherings (parties, dancing, drumming) are also commonly identified across

⁴ The MSS for the ABP in the interstate areas of Western Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap was utilized in a shortened way by adapting the indicators elaborated under the Koch ABP for the household survey in 2020.

the target areas as indicators that people feel safe and the environment is peaceful.

Respondents in Jonglei/GPAA communities indicated that the ability to leave children unattended without fear of abduction was an important sign of peace. If one sees children playing beyond their homes, it implies that the parents feel safe to let them be outside without fear of abduction.

While it could be pertinent to other communities as well, only respondents in Koch specified the ability to sleep outside during the dry season as an indicator of feeling safe and secure. During the focus group discussions, these respondents also mentioned being able to move some distance to excrete without the fear of being attacked.

One indicator pertinent to Murle society in Jonglei/GPAA relates to age-set dynamics⁵ and whether youth use sticks or guns during confrontations. In many payams, the young age-sets were accused of primarily owning guns. At the same time, however, people stated that youth had returned to sticks and not guns for inter-Murle age-set conflicts.

The value of the MSS approach is that it allows the assessment to record people's actual behaviour and how they perceive safety while carrying out daily tasks. This makes the responses less reliant on their own interpretation or memory of 'safety'. Instead, the survey records how people's actions changed and how everyday practices were shaped by safety (or a lack thereof).

Koch MSS trend data

While the MSS was designed to provide evidence for tracking longer-term impact of the RSRTF interventions in the target areas, in the immediate term it also provides a rich source of contextual insight to the conflict dynamics

in communities. For instance, while clearly observing a decline in actual experiences of violence,⁶ echoed in the decreased percentage of respondents reporting experiencing violence (65 percent in baseline in 2019 to 38.6 percent in the follow-up survey in 2021), the follow-up survey in Koch revealed an overall decline in people perceiving that they felt safe and secure in 2021.

The most significant decline in indicators of perceptions of safety was in the reduction in people's movement between government and in-opposition (iO) areas. In 2019, 75 percent of respondents said that they had moved between government-held and armed opposition-held territory, and 91 percent of those said that they felt safe doing so. In September 2021, only 44.3 percent of people said that they had moved between these areas of control, and 82.7 percent said that they felt safe doing so. Including those who did not move, those who felt unsafe moving between government and SPLA-iO areas increased from 23 percent in 2019 to 43 percent in 2021. At the time of the survey, there was growing SPLA-iO-government tension, and threats against people moving between these areas. This growing tension might have caused the broader decline in perceptions of safety and security and connected behavior.

Measurement of safety and security is challenging, as such conditions and perceptions do not necessarily change on a progressive and linear basis. It is also not easy to isolate a single indicator or proxy-indicator. Therefore, MSS recommends generating and using multiple sub-indicators coupled with prioritizing locally informed sub-indicators. This would allow a nuanced perspective of safety and security dynamics through ongoing assessment, and the ability to capture the influence of other variables such as seasonality and the prevailing economic and political dynamics.

5 Age-sets are an anthropological concept describing a system of social stratification in which people of similar ages are grouped together, generally throughout their lives, taking on a group identity and moving together through prescribed social roles according to their group's position and status (Foner and Kurtzer, 1978).

6 UNMISS HRD data shows a sharp decline in the number of casualties (abducted, experiencing conflict-related sexual violence, killed, wounded) in Koch from 106 in 2020 to six in 2021. Accordingly, the same MSS follow-up survey of November 2021 revealed a decline in the actual experiences of violence.

RESTORING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE FOR BETTER LIVELIHOODS IN KOCH

The first ABP launched in Koch in 2019 sought to consolidate a reduction in fighting that came about following the signing of the revitalized peace agreement in an area that had experienced some of the worst violence and atrocities of the conflict. The interventions looked to demonstrate dividends of peace by staving off violence, while helping communities to collectively establish conditions to realize recovery and development opportunities that would enable some of the many displaced people to gradually return home.

In the final year of Phase I, partners established a further seven local peace committees, engaging women and youth in sustainable and inclusive community-based conflict resolution structures. These peace committees successfully mediated 93 percent of the cases referred to them. The programme further engaged over 2,500 stakeholders in 11 peace dialogues in Koch, Bentiu and Rubkona counties to identify and address conflict drivers, with over 50 percent participation of women. In this process, partners specifically targeted communities in areas with opposing political affiliations to enhance peaceful coexistence through dialogue and conflict management training.

In addition to strengthening informal conflict resolution mechanisms, the ABP made significant contributions towards ensuring access to justice through the establishment of seven chiefs' courts. In these, chiefs trained in both customary and statutory law, documented at least 673 cases, 92 percent of which were resolved. Through sensitization and awareness-raising campaigns on victim redress mechanisms, referral pathways, legal aid and formal court systems, the programme contributed towards ensuring appropriate and timely redressal of grievances, thus preventing a return to violence.

Despite building chiefs' capacity to adjudicate cases, however, the absence of statutory

state-level courts continued to limit effective referral of serious crimes, and hindered the establishment of a viable redress mechanism for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

Building on its peacebuilding gains, the ABP strengthened market systems and diversified household livelihoods, creating interdependent economies through training in business management, provision of start-up grants and rehabilitation of community assets. Partners aimed to sustain the progress achieved in violence reduction by engaging youth productively, demonstrating the benefits of developing income-generating skills and deterring their involvement in violence. For instance, the programme enhanced peaceful coexistence through the participation of at-risk youth to establish 12 community assets, including access roads.

The September 2021 final programme evaluation report highlighted how the RSRTF interventions in Phase I had contributed to improved justice outcomes, economic resilience of programme participants, and the community's ability to resolve conflicts through peace committees without resorting to violence. A marked increase in the number of cases referred to peace committees and chiefs' courts for resolution was noted, indicating greater trust in community-based peace and justice mechanisms. Collectively, these outcomes contributed to

2021 highlights:



123

community disputes **mediated** and **de-escalated** by the peace committees

129

incidents of **violence**, including **gender-based violence** survivors supported with **mental health** and **psychosocial support** services

188

community leaders **trained in good governance**

502

community members **supported** to exercise **housing, land** and **property rights**

42

justice chain actors (judicial personnel, police, prosecutors) **trained**



2,569

(1,627 female; 942 male) youth and women trained/**supported for livelihood resilience**

148

adolescents, youth and women provided with **second-chance education**

6

kilometers of inter-community roads cleared by **400 community members**

10

UNMISS
patrols
conducted



greater stability in Koch. The evaluation also demonstrated a positive shift in intercommunal relations with an increasing number of people reporting free movement outside their communities without fear of attacks.

However, despite a marked increase in the number of people pursuing livelihood activities farther away from their homes, a steady decline in perceptions of safety and security was noted in ethnographic survey data across Koch County. This was mostly attributed to insecurity arising from activities by armed cattle camp youth and cattle raiders from neighbouring counties, as well as organized violence between security forces in and around Koch, as movement between areas controlled by competing groups remained restricted.

The programme's contribution to increased stability in Koch over the past two years demonstrates that the RSRTF approach, bringing together partners across the 'triple nexus' of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding, is working.

2022 will see the further development and scale-up of the original RSRTF ABP under a second phase of programming approved by

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the Fund Steering Committee in November 2021 intended to consolidate and expand stabilization gains made to date. The second phase expansion significantly improves the likelihood of a positive and sustainable outcome for the RSRTF in terms of a reduction in violence and increased stability in Koch. Phase II will see partners expand programming to more rural areas to incorporate cattle camp youth. There will also be more intentional efforts to address cattle raids and revenge killings, often perpetrated by youth, occurring between communities residing in Koch and neighbouring counties, including Guit, Mayendit, Mayom and Rubkona.

With the inclusion of UNMISS Rule of Law and UNPOL into the consortium, the mission will work with the ABP partners and communities to strengthen the traditional justice system through special and mobile courts, and train local police, prison and customary court officials to adjudicate cases related to gender-

based violence. The incorporation of UNMISS as a partner in the programme will enhance the required political engagement with county-level government institutions to heighten support for the programme. This will serve to increase local ownership and accountability, as well as engage chiefs from across in-government/in-opposition camps to ease political tensions in Koch.

As highlighted in the 2021 independent early-stage evaluation of the RSRTF, the changes required to bring peace to places struggling with protracted conflict are achieved over generations. Phase I of the RSRTF programme in Koch, however, clearly demonstrated that it is possible to achieve some progress in a short space of time. The second phase of programming will enable partners to safeguard the investments to date and to strengthen and nurture the structures and behaviours needed to enable long-term transformational change.



RSRTF donors' visit to Koch ABP.

MITIGATING CATTLE-RELATED VIOLENCE IN THE TRI-STATE BORDER AREAS OF TONJ, GOGRIAL AND WAU

The second RSRTF ABP was launched in response to an unprecedented intensification of violence between Luo farmers and Dinka cattle-keepers in 2019 in the Jur River border areas between Wau and Warrap. The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) led a consortium of partners working to operationalize the United Nations Strategic Response Plan to Mitigate Cattle Raiding-Related Conflict. Through context-specific, multi-sector programming the pilot project linked community-based peacebuilding, economic security and governance reform with broader issues of security and peace. Specifically, the ABP supported the implementation of the local Marial Bai Peace Agreement regulating cattle migration and the deployment of an innovative joint special mobile court trying cattle-related cases. These efforts were complemented by resilience activities aimed at reducing resource pressures and fostering trade between agriculturalist and pastoralist communities.

By the end of its second year of implementation, the programme had achieved 85 percent of its planned objectives. Overall, the interventions contributed to a significant reduction of inter-communal violence and enhanced reconciliation in 12 of 14 targeted border areas during the 2021 cattle migration season. Since the start of the RSRTF ABP in January 2020, which adopted the signing of the Revised Marial Bai Agreement (MBA) in November 2019 as the main entry point for programming, the Western Bahr el Ghazal-Warrap area has shown a significant improvement in terms of security and stability. Stakeholders in Wau, Kuajok and Juba are unified in their views that cattle migration-related violence, particularly in the Jur River area, has significantly reduced over the past two years.

These observations are substantiated by UNMISS Human Rights Division data on violence against civilians. While HRD recorded similar levels of violence in 2020 compared to 2019 in the Jur River area, there was a marked decrease in violence in Jur River during the 2021 dry season.

While there are inherent challenges in establishing a direct correlation between the activities of the ABP and the reduction in violence, all stakeholders highlight the

significance of the ABP activities in terms of contributing to the positive trends observed. The ABP end-of-programme evaluation planned for early 2022 should serve to highlight additional causal pathways through which the ABP has contributed to violence reduction.

Importantly, the interventions have strengthened the capacities of community-level mechanisms for conflict management and peacebuilding including among Marial Bai committees, local chiefs and youth leaders and local organizations. Through support to the MBA peace process and implementation structures the ABP has contributed to the strengthening of community-level conflict resolution and prevention mechanisms. These structures included the Interstate Coordinating Committee on Cattle Seasonal Movement (ICCCSM) monitoring committee, the dispute resolution committee and community discussion leaders (local level peace committees).

The ABP support includes capacity-building of the MBA committees through training and workshops, assistance with annual work plan development, and facilitating regular engagement with both communities' chiefs,

2021 highlights:



46 community disputes **mediated** and **de-escalated** by Marial Bai committees

1,454 youth **sensitized** in adaptive positive masculinities/gender-based violence **primary prevention approach**

1,069 pastoralist youth provided with access to **'education on the move'**

221 persons **provided** with **legal aid** support

42 **justice chain actors** (judicial personnel, police, prosecutors) **trained**

83 formal and informal justice sector actors supported to establish referral pathways between statutory customary justice systems within and across states, including **sexual and gender-based violence** legal frameworks

2,667 (1,182 females; 1,485 males) youth and women trained in commercially oriented **livestock** and **farming**

6

animal sheds and boreholes constructed

1,069 (434 females; 635 males) cattle camp youth and children trained in the pastoral livelihoods **education field schools**

153

UNMISS patrols conducted

1,400 complaints reviewed by a mobile court deployed; **68 cases investigated** and adjudicated



youth leaders and relevant authorities. The ABP's logistical support to the ICCCSM's rapid 'mobile peace responses' enabled the committee to effectively respond to early warning reports, prevent violence, and share information rapidly with the relevant government actors. ABP partners reported that as a result of this support, "the project successfully helped resolve 94 incidences of conflicts in the community" and directly contributed to the implementation of Resolutions 13 and 14 of the Revised MBA on the establishment of these committees. In addition, by supporting the annual migration conference, the ABP directly contributed to the continuance and preservation of the MBA peace process. The ABP's peacebuilding and political engagement efforts also included consultation forums in Wau Town that targeted Wau-based communities to de-escalate tensions relating to cattle migration.

The establishment and support for the deployment of the joint special mobile court (JSMC) under the stabilization component

of the programme has been a major accomplishment. During the first deployment of the JSMC, from 25 May to 7 July 2021, a total of 68 cases were investigated, resulting in 65 arrest warrants being issued against 94 suspects. Feedback from communities indicated that the existence of the JSMC proved to be an effective deterrent to vigilante justice and specifically reduced the level of rape and looting in the affected areas. Encouragingly, the 2021 Pre-Season Cattle Migration Conference communiqué made reference to the JSMC, calling for "the government and other stakeholders to strengthen the JSMC to try new cases committed during the 2022 cattle movement." ABP partners believe that this is due to the conference participants' perception that the JSMC was contributing to tackling impunity, deterring future crimes and generally promoting reconciliation.

Activities under the resilience pillar, which address drivers of cattle-related violence and serve to create incentives for peace, have progressed well. ABP partners implemented



Partners rehabilitated the 48 kilometre road from Kuajena to Pagol, which they hope will deepen socioeconomic interdependencies between cattle keepers and farmers and strengthen social cohesion.

a broad range of resilience activities with the objective of reducing natural resource competition in the border area. Building water infrastructure along approved migration routes enabled cattle keepers to stay in Tonj, thus preventing further conflict and generating 'peace dividends' of increased stability. To achieve this, partners implemented, among other things, livestock vaccination campaigns, income-generating activities, agribusiness training and water infrastructure projects (supported by the establishment of community-based water management groups).

Partners also provided 'education on the move' for pastoralists, in which more than 500 cattle camp youth and women have been enrolled, and rehabilitated the 48 kilometre road from Kuajena (Jur River) to Pagol (Tong North), which they hope will deepen socioeconomic interdependencies between cattle keepers and farmers and strengthen social cohesion.

Through these activities, partners directly contributed to Resolution 1 of the revised MBA centering on the preservation of natural resources. While some resilience activities might yield short-term economic benefits, some of the peace dividends will possibly only start to materialize in the long term after the ABP has closed. This is particularly the case for community infrastructure initiatives such as water yards, that have only recently been completed. ABP partners stated, "Resilience interventions, including drilling of new water sources, will further reinforce the above achievements by creating a 'holding period' for cattle keepers to allow farmers to harvest their produce."

The longer-term impact of the ABP, including of the infrastructure interventions mentioned above, will have to be assessed long after the closure of the programme. However, some notable activities are envisaged to leave a clear legacy, including the rehabilitated Kuajena-Pagol 'peace road' which will benefit the local communities, government actors, and wider United Nations and non-

governmental partners in the region. The rehabilitation of the road, as ABP partners have pointed out, will not only spur trade between communities in Kuajena and Pagol, but also help future stabilization efforts "by enabling UNMISS and state governments to undertake effective patrols for enhanced community safety and security in border areas of the two states" and by easing the movement of the JSMC.

Reflecting on the value added of the 'triple nexus' approach, partners noted a synergetic effect between the International Organization for Migration's (IOM's) peacebuilding work and RoLAS' work on the JSMC, where cases that were deemed too grave for reconciliation/peacebuilding community mechanisms were referred to the JSMC or other appropriate competent justice mechanisms. Moreover, partners argued, "The presence of peace has greatly helped in improving the livelihoods of the border communities since they are able to farm, harvest their produce, and freely access markets without fearing for possible attacks, which were common in the areas before the project intervention." This provides at least anecdotal evidence that the RSRTF's area-based approach has fostered a more conducive environment for resilience and development endeavours.

Overall, the observations of the interventions to date can be seen as evidence of a 'virtuous cycle' between reconciliation and stabilization activities on the one hand and resilience efforts on the other. Reconciliation and stabilization activities contributed to violence reduction in Jur River and more stability, thus creating a more enabling environment for resilience activities. Resilience interventions, in turn, helped generate 'peace dividends', particularly in tackling resource scarcity, one of the main conflict drivers.

These 'peace dividends' arguably created incentives for communities to protect livelihood gains, thus raising the opportunity costs of engaging in cattle migration-related violence.

JONGLEI/GPAA – COMMUNITY VIOLENCE REDUCTION

The Jonglei/GPAA area-based programme (ABP) was launched in January 2021 to respond to large-scale organized intra- and inter-communal violence between the Dinka, Nuer and Murle communities.

The violent history in Jonglei is well documented. Prior to the political violence associated with the 2013 civil war that has characterized much of the insecurity affecting the area over the past seven years, subnational and grassroots layers of violence had existed, predating even the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the two Sudanese civil wars.

Motivations and interactions among the interpersonal, grassroots, state and national level political and economic agendas continue to produce consistently high levels of organized violence which, since 2020, have been further exacerbated by involvement of opposing security forces reflective of divisions within the incumbent government. The current dynamics have increased the scale, scope and complexity of the civilian needs, and immediate humanitarian support and civilian protection requirements are high. However, with conflict remaining the main driver of severe food insecurity, such emergency response efforts must be linked to longer term reconciliation, stabilization and resilience activities that address root causes of conflict and concurrently increase resilience to organized violence, while reducing impunity for the violence that does occur.

The APB, launched through the RSRTF, brings together four consortia with 16 United Nations and international and national NGO partners from across the 'triple nexus' to deliver an ambitious multi-sector programme to sustainably address the conflict drivers. The ABP supports local actors in implementing

the March 2021 Pieri Peace Agreement between the three communities and supports norms of non-violence, conflict management and reconciliation, as well as preventing the abduction of women and children and facilitating their release.

At the same time, the programme is strengthening community policing and informal justice systems and frameworks, including through locally driven reconciliatory mechanisms and by building foundations to establish linkages to an effective formal justice system. With the same target communities, the programme partners foster development of collaborative resource allocation and planning, and implement locally identified projects with the potential to reduce violent competition over resources. This reduces economic marginalization of youth and women and creates opportunities to access secondary school education and adult literacy courses.

Despite the challenges posed by heavy rainfall, flooding and conflict, the programme partners have largely achieved (and in some cases exceeded) planned outcome and output targets for the first year. The RSRTF area reference group has been instrumental in enhancing information sharing and collaboration through joint assessment, development, implementation and monitoring of interventions. The partners have been able to strengthen the link between humanitarian and development needs and actions, and leverage existing programmes and economies of scale to address the root causes of conflict.

2021 highlights:



1,309 survivors of **violence**, including gender-based violence, supported with **mental health** and **psychosocial support** services

567 persons **provided** with **legal aid** support

18 **police community relations** committees established

5
peace clubs
created at
schools

215 **justice chain actors** (judicial personnel, police, prosecutors) **trained**

401 youth, women and men trained in **community security approach** and action planning

1,200 (606 women; 594 men) trained in sound agricultural practices to **boost production** and **productivity** and improve **post-harvest management**

758 youth supported to **develop their livelihoods**, mainly through increasing **production** of **staple crops** beyond small-scale household-level farming

575 persons provided with **functional adult literacy**

145
UNMISS
patrols
conducted

1,418 pupils **enrolled** in six secondary schools

130 abducted children and women **released** and returned to families and communities



Throughout the year, partners facilitated and participated in at least 12 dialogues and high-level consultative meetings in Juba, Bor, Pibor and Akobo aimed at ensuring continued commitment and support for these initiatives.

Reconciliation

Efforts to maintain momentum around the Pieri Peace Conference have been central to the Jonglei/GPAA programme. Throughout the year, partners facilitated and participated in at least 12 dialogues and high-level consultative meetings in Juba, Bor, Pibor and Akobo aimed at ensuring continued commitment and support for these initiatives. The ABP partnered with Peace Canal in the implementation of intra-communal dialogues in Bor, Gumuruk, Kongor, Pibor and Akobo. After the Pieri Peace Conference in March 2021, a series of consultative meetings were conducted in Kongor, Gumuruk and Pibor for the inclusion of Gawaar, which had previously been left out.

Community governance structures workshops were held in Bor, Gumuruk, Pibor and Akobo. Partners also jointly facilitated three high-level consultative meetings for state and local authorities in Juba. In parallel, partners reported 25 political engagements intended to lead key influencers/stakeholders to exert their influence to prevent and stop the abduction of women and children, and to facilitate returns. Activities included political engagement with local elites, national and state authorities, bilateral and high-level meetings with Nuer, Dinka and Murle leaders/influencers and high-level events/dialogues to raise awareness and advocate for the end of abductions as a means to mitigate violence and conflict in Jonglei/GPAA.

Critical to averting revenge cycles of violence, the UNHCR-led consortium and project partners UNMISS HRD, CEPO and Save the Children International reported 130 successful returns in 2021. These included 38 women, 47 girls and 45 boys. Activities included assessing and responding to victims' needs, providing psychosocial support, and assessing families' attitudes towards the return of abductees and children born during abduction. In addition, partners engaged with victims' families and communities on victim reintegration, stigma prevention, gender roles, stereotypes, and the gendered impact of conflict. The return or/and exchange of abductees between communities is referenced as the most tangible symbol of peace dividends in Greater Jonglei. The rate of known cases of abduction from the 18 months prior to January 2021 reduced by 78 percent (from 818 to 178) in Jonglei and the GPAA. UNMISS HRD's Annual Brief on Violence Affecting Civilians for 2021 notes, "The reduction in violence compared to the previous year's cycle of intercommunal violence between the communities [of Jonglei and GPAA] contributed to a significant decrease in abduction rates."

Partners also provided increased skills and knowledge to 485 persons (360 women and 125 girls) from target communities to act as change agents and prevent abductions and sexual and gender-based violence. Activities included supporting youth-led and peer-to-peer activities

Table 4: RSRTF ARG provides a forum for coordination of actors supported by different donors

PROJECT	PARTNERS	DONORS
Community violence reduction	WFP, UNMISS, WHO, NP, VCF-G	RSRTF
Providing access to quality education through secondary school education and functional adult literacy	IOM, UNICEF	RSRTF
Community security and access to justice	UNDP, UNPOL	RSRTF
Reducing violence by preventing the abduction of women and children and facilitating the release	UNGCR, UNMISS, HDR/OCHR, Save the Children, CEPO	RSRTF
Development and strengthening of inter-communal dialogue processes and systems	POF/Peace Canal	Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
Supporting local organizations to engage in community-based peace processes	Shejeh Salam	USAID
Building a culture of social cohesion and peace	Catholic Relief Services	European Union

on peacebuilding, gender equality and non-violent behaviour through the formation of four youth clubs, developing training modules on the causes and consequences of conflict in Jonglei and GPAA, and recommending contextualized change-agent roles women and children could play to mitigate violence, with special focus on abductions and sexual violence.

ABP partners have placed significant emphasis on engaging youth in conflict mitigation and enhancing their leadership in peace processes. Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) organized 15 community level meetings to strengthen coordination between youth and young women peace actors. The meetings had a total of 847 participants (119 women, 260 men, 93 young women, 257 young men, 34 girls and 84 boys). During the meetings, youths discussed their roles in preventing and de-escalating conflict, raising awareness on peace processes such as the Pieri peace process, as well as productive engagement with humanitarian organizations. The meetings were a precursor to the establishment of a multisectoral youth coordination mechanism to coordinate and report on youth engagement in humanitarian development and peacebuilding activities.



A women's representative shares outcomes of the high-level dialogue and reaffirms the roles and commitments of women to the peace process.

Efforts to reconcile communities and prevent further violence received substantial support in the form of air and road patrols conducted by UNMISS Peacekeeping Forces with the objective of protecting civilians and humanitarian actors and safeguarding transport infrastructure across Jonglei and GPAA. A temporary operating base was established in Gumuruk, and more are planned for strategic areas such as Gadiang and Lekuangle to monitor security and deter violence. UNMISS ongoing repairs of the Bor-Pibor and Pibor-Akobo roads, coupled with the security patrols and force protection for humanitarians, have contributed to increased movement of humanitarian aid, people and traders, thus enhancing social cohesion.

Stabilization

ABP partners, UNMISS RoLAS and UNDP-UNPOL focused on strengthening community security, governance and rule of law. The ABP facilitated the construction of three justice and confidence centres (JCCs), through which 567 people, of whom 79 percent were female, accessed legal aid services in Pibor, Duk and Akobo. Furthermore, 122,430 people, of whom 51 percent were female, were reached with legal information, including access to available services at the JCCs. The ABP further established three new police posts and operationalization of 18 Police and Community Relations Committees (two in Twic East County, four in Pibor, two in Akobo County and ten in Bor South County), and completed the renovation of the female wing and the construction of a sewage system at Bor Central Prison.

The stabilization component of the programme has also supported absorption of former soldiers into policing and prison functions and provided training on the South Sudanese Police Service Act 2009, South Sudan legislation, community policing and sexual and gender-based violence. With the objective of professionalizing justice and security actors, 215 people (73 females) were empowered with professional and technical skills relating to civil policing, inmate management, legislation of South Sudan and legal protocols, alternatives to dispute resolution, and human rights. As

a result, partners report improvement in community security and increased numbers of people seeking redress in the formal and informal justice and security institutions.

Reducing the incidence of revenge violence by enhancing the role of justice and accountability mechanisms is a central component of the ABP strategy. Despite building chiefs' capacity to manage cases at their level, and the formation of community governance structures, the absence of statutory state level courts limits the effective referral of serious crimes and hinders the establishment of a viable redress mechanism for survivors of serious crimes including sexual and gender-based violence and murder. For the programme to meet its objectives, establishment of formal courts such as bench courts or, at the least, mobile special courts will be essential.

RoLAS, in coordination with NP and Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund (POF)/Peace Canal, is also supporting the implementation of the Pieri Action for Peace, and in particular, the intercommunal governance structures established therein – a critical element of the stabilization component. In October, RoLAS supported the inter-communal governance structure inception workshop in Bor. It also coordinated with NP and POF/Peace Canal, to co-organize the Kongor youth forum and Pibor inter-communal governance structure meeting in November and December, respectively. These forums enabled local government officials, namely county commissioners, to engage with communities in political, peace and security decision-making.

RoLAS has also presented options available under national law to ensure accountability for inter-communal incidents and violations of the Pieri Action for Peace, ranging from a special court to a compensation committee. While additional time is needed for chiefs and county authorities to clarify the proposal for a traditional circuit court, the December workshop laid an important foundation and advanced the conversation across community lines about what constituted an appropriate mechanism. Further discussions will be held

To safeguard efforts to build peace, the programme also addresses underlying drivers of conflict through efforts that enhance community resilience and access to resources and services.

during the inter-communal governance structure meeting in Ayod, which is planned for March 2022.

Resilience

To safeguard efforts to build peace, the programme also addresses underlying drivers of conflict through efforts that enhance community resilience and access to resources and services. Asset plans were developed based on community priorities, and were designed to address root causes of violence and hunger. In all targeted bomas, hunger was identified as a source of conflict, and assets to enhance household food production were prioritized. In total, 2,000 feddan (~840 hectares) of land were identified for clearing and production of staple crops. In all locations where the project was successfully implemented, 100 percent of the plan was achieved in terms of land preparation and planting, although flooding had a significant impact on crop performance in Akobo, with about 80 percent of production destroyed. However, the targeted communities were supported to adapt programme activities to secure as much of the harvest as possible by building small dykes around the farmlands and drying the remaining sorghum.



Former Jonglei State Governor, Hon. Philip Aguer Panyang, delivers closing remarks at the high-level dialogue on ending abductions. He extended his appreciation to the donors and partners that are dedicated to peace initiatives in Jonglei State and the GPAA. He further stated that he hoped that both the national and state governments will be fully committed to the processes.

Community infrastructure was identified as a secondary priority, informing activities to improve livelihoods and access to basic services. Due to the floods in Akobo, more drainage construction was undertaken than planned, as people moved from working on access roads and pond construction. One-thousand-two-hundred people (606 women and 594 men) of a target of 2,000 were engaged in the asset creation activities, and 1,200 youth and women were trained on food production techniques. Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSF) Germany supported programme participants with treatment and the vaccination of 189,901 livestock in both Jonglei and GPAA. World Health Organization also trained 262 community health workers and equipped eight health facilities in Akobo and GPAA with medical supplies, where 1,309 people received medical and psychosocial services from the facilities. In addition, the ABP supported the development and adoption of a county-specific sexual and gender-based

violence referral pathway to ensure timely and safe links for survivors to services.

Food assistance was provided monthly to ensure that households had a sufficient kilo-caloric intake to participate in asset creation activities. This was essential in any case, given the severity of food insecurity in the project locations, where populations were classified as facing famine-like conditions by the integrated food security phase classification technical working group.

In terms of community asset creation, a major success was the drainage construction and road rehabilitation in Walgak, which helped to protect the town and its market, allowing traders to continue receiving goods from Juba through the rainy season, with the road serving as an airstrip for fixed-wing aircraft. This was the first year in which such deliveries were possible. In addition, improved access to the community enabled the movement of a government delegation of parliamentarians who conducted reconciliation meetings between different subsections in the community.

Also under the resilience pillar, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and IOM recorded positive results under the secondary school education and functional adult literacy component. A total of 1,418 (311 female) learners were enrolled in six secondary schools, which represents 94.5 percent of the 1,500 students targeted by the project in Bor, Akobo and Pibor. The programme supports improved performance among teachers in government schools and attracts students who have dropped out of school to re-enroll in secondary schools. This is attributed to the training and incentives being provided to the volunteer teachers and the rehabilitation of schools by the ABP. The programme established parent-teacher associations and school management committees in target locations and strengthened their awareness about gender-based violence, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, school management and the development of school improvement plans.

Through the functional adult literacy activities, IOM enrolled 575 students and provided training in numeracy, literacy, simple business records and management of livelihoods activities, as well as empowered women and youth in conflict mitigation. All participants in the resilience interventions were also targeted under the reconciliation and stabilization elements of the programme. Together the activities are complementary and designed to dissuade violent competition while providing the youth with experience of non-violent sources of power and enabling them to exercise agency.

Looking ahead

Violence reduction and addressing the root causes of violence is non-linear, and the experience of partners in Jonglei and GPAA is testament to this. There have been significant and constant fluctuations in the peace and stability environment throughout the project to date. While no major offensives took place in 2021, persistent raids by Murle armed elements into Uror, Twic, Duk and Ayod, as well as continuing and worsening cycles of intra-Nuer, intra-Dinka and intra-Murle violence, threatened to undermine gains made in the grassroots peace processes supported by the RSRTF partners.

However, the project team, through observation and discussions with participants, believe the project has contributed to improving conflict and security dynamics, and has facilitated, in places and for periods of time (for example in Akobo), a better environment for humanitarian, development and peace interventions in central-southern Jonglei and the GPAA.

This improvement was primarily achieved following the Pieri Peace Process Agreement (March–August, 2021) which created a more stable environment and during which, no mass mobilizations occurred across central-southern Jonglei. The Pieri Peace Process has enhanced emphasis on relations between the three main communities of greater Jonglei: Lou Nuer, (work is now underway to integrate the Gawaar Nuer into the process), Dinka Bor and Murle. Certain drivers of the conflict are at the intersection of

these communities, whereas others are internal to the communities, adding to and fuelling the complexity of the situation.

Despite this progress, conflict is still a regular occurrence and there are frequent flare-ups of violence between different local, regional and national groups that have negative implications for individuals in these areas. Because unresolved internal issues can also indirectly fuel inter-communal conflict and undermine stability, there will be no sustainable peace without focused interventions within the main communities. As such, in 2022 the RSRTF consortium will focus its interventions on intra-communal tensions, while continuing to link all interventions at this level to the inter-communal peace and reconciliation agenda established through the Pieri process. It must also remain linked to the material dividends of peace, in the form of development priorities that are articulated by the communities themselves.

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DESIGNING AN RSRTF RESPONSE TO INSTABILITY IN SOUTHERN CENTRAL EQUATORIA STATE

Southern Central Equatoria State (CES) has a rich history of agricultural production. Dubbed the 'breadbasket' of South Sudan, the region was long considered an island of stability. Agriculture was one of the mainstays in the area and food insecurity levels remained low, despite the hunger that had engulfed much of the rest of the country at the time. However, all of this changed with the spread of the South Sudanese civil war into the region after 2016. In recent years, southern Central Equatoria has recorded some of the highest levels of violence and civilian casualties in South Sudan and by 2021 faced a range of security and governance challenges.

Multiple armed actors are present in southern CES vying for power, opportunities for extortion and control over natural resources such as timber, agricultural produce and gold. Civilians in CES continue to suffer from hostilities between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the Sudan People's Liberation Army-in Opposition (SPLA-iO) and the National Salvation Front, as well as more localized livestock and natural resource-related conflicts. Conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, including rape

and sexual slavery, are widespread in parts of southern CES, particularly in Yei. The divisiveness of ethnopolitics, the weakening of conflict resolution mechanisms, and lack of locally accepted officials pose significant governance challenges, while some rural areas remain contested or partly controlled by non-state armed groups.

Years of armed conflict have resulted in great suffering of the civilian population, killing and displacing thousands, increasing humanitarian need and destroying critical infrastructure. Despite CES' history as a 'breadbasket', insecurity and displacement has contributed to high levels of food insecurity. At the same time, there has been a significant increase in numbers of returning abductees into some parts of southern CES. Worsening conditions in countries of asylum, including cuts in food rations and closure of schools, are contributing to an increase in returns from Uganda, for example. It is anticipated that these higher levels of returns into southern CES will likely increase pressures on already scarce resources and basic services, and raise issues around housing, land and property when individuals return to their places of origin or try to resettle elsewhere.

The need for an ambitious programme that would stabilize southern CES and prevent further violence was therefore clear. It was

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equally clear that any response to violence, underlying governance weaknesses and returns-related grievances would require a 'whole-of-systems' approach drawing on the comparative advantage of a range of actors across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. The RSRTF's Steering Committee thus decided in early 2021 to launch a new area-based programme in southern CES.

Following a detailed review of 11 proposals received from more than 35 organizations representing national and international NGOs and United Nations entities, the Fund's Steering Committee awarded US\$10.3 million to an ABP seeking to *implement Locally-Driven Solutions for Social Cohesion and Promoting Early Recovery in the Country's Former Breadbasket*. Under the leadership of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), two national NGOs, the Community Empowerment for Progress

Organization (CEPO) and the Support for Peace and Education Development Programme (SPEDP), and two international NGOs, Finn Church Aid (FCA) and the Whitaker Peace and Development Initiative, came together with the goal to promote stability in southern CES and pave the way for early recovery.

The ABP, which will run until September 2023, was officially inaugurated in November 2021 by the South Sudanese National Minister of Peacebuilding and the Deputy Governor of Central Equatoria State. Over 20 county representatives from Yei, Lainya, Kajo Keji and Morobo attended the launch event. Other relevant stakeholders in attendance included religious leaders, community-based organizations, members of civil society, women and youth representatives and various area reference group members, signalling significant buy-in to the new programme



from the communities, government and extended partners.

The ABP consortium will draw on the comparative advantages and deep field presence of the five organizations involved, delivering an integrated programme based on three inter-linked reconciliation, stabilization and resilience components. Partners will adopt an 'adaptive peacebuilding' approach, based on regular in-depth conflict analyses, that allows the consortium to adapt activities to the evolving context. In close coordination with UNMISS Field Office for CES, the consortium will enhance bottom-up conflict resolution structures, strengthen the rule of law, enhance community participation in political decision-making, and reduce pressure on scarce natural resources and basic services. For example, partners will support members of the Youth Peace Network in organizing community dialogues to prevent and resolve conflicts. Some of the network's members will also be invited to participate in business plan competitions sponsored by the ABP, giving them an opportunity to build livelihoods and act as role models for other youth.

Partners also plan to organize dialogues to improve civilian-military relations and to lower the barriers to reconciliation related to trauma and mental health. During these activities, partners will be able to draw on UNMISS's 'good offices' in case they encounter roadblocks or require political engagement support along the way. Additionally, partners have already kicked-off a historic and highly welcomed review of the customary laws of southern CES. The rule of law will be further strengthened by rehabilitating traditional and civil courts and establishing police community relations committees in each of the four target counties. Other critical activities will include support to resolving housing, land and property issues. In the longer term, through these reconciliation, stabilization and resilience activities, the RSRTF's partners seek to reduce conflict in southern CES to enable community members to reclaim their lives and revive the region's status as South Sudan's breadbasket.

In focus: Localization in CES

In 2021, the RSRTF and its partners continued their efforts to localize programmatic activities. South Sudanese ownership of the Fund's goals and results in the field is the key to impact and sustainability. Each of the RSRTF's four ABPs is designed differently to respond to the varying and highly localized nature of conflict systems in the country. The RSRTF's newest ABP in southern Central Equatoria, which seeks to implement *Locally-Driven Solutions for Social Cohesion and Promoting Early Recovery*, is a perfect example for how the Fund and its partners design a local response and empower South Sudanese actors.

Given the multiplicity of stakeholders involved in the Fund's programmes, there are many different layers of South Sudanese ownership from local communities, payam, county and state authorities, to national-level actors. The IOM-led ABP in southern CES is working across all these levels to ensure that the South Sudanese are in the driver's seat of its activities. The two national non-governmental organizations that are part of the ABP consortium, CEPO and SPEDP, are pivotal in this regard, leveraging their deep field presence, expertise, networks and relationships in support of the ABP's localization efforts.

Starting with government authorities, ABP partners have joined hands with UNMISS to ensure political buy-in of government officials at the national, state and county levels. UNMISS Head of Field Office for CES played a prominent role in these efforts, leading a delegation of the ABP implementing partners to brief the Governor of CES, Honourable Emmanuel Adil Anthony, and the Minister of Cabinet Affairs for CES, Honourable Wayi Goodwill Edward, on the new ABP at its onset. Subsequently, in a strong sign of government authorities' buy-in and support for the new ABP, a high-level government delegation attended the ABP's launch event in Yei. Stephen Par Kuol, National Minister of Peacebuilding, thanked the local communities, the RSRTF and its implementing partners for launching the ABP on behalf of the Revitalized Transitional

Partners will build on these findings to further tailor their activities to the different contexts across the target counties.

Government of National Unity. Sarah Nene Redento, Deputy Governor of CES, said that she was optimistic about the programme since “this programme is ours.” Aggrey Cyrus Kanyi, Yei River County Commissioner, concurred, stating, “our solutions to our problems are with us in South Sudan. Local solutions are the best solutions to us. The problem is ours and we have the ability and capacity to take this country forward.”

Beyond government authorities, RSRTF partners worked equally hard to secure local community ownership. In designing their interventions, partners seek out locally driven and defined solutions. One example of this is the ABP’s work on strengthening the rule of law. ABP partners have embarked on a customary law review with traditional authorities and diverse community representatives. Through this highly interactive review, partners will be able to gain an understanding of the community’s perception and experience of customary law. Community discussions have already started revealing gaps in the application of customary law, creating the foundation for the CES state legislature to adopt customary law that has been established and reviewed by the local communities. This groundwork will enable the Fund’s partners to work with local stakeholders to strengthen traditional judicial systems in line with the customs and norms particular to the area.

Additionally, the ABP has established a feedback and accountability mechanism in the communities. In each of the four counties, partners are working with reference groups consisting of five community representatives: the local chief, a woman representative, a youth leader, a person living with disability and a religious figure. Partners consult these groups and ask them to provide feedback on the ABP’s activities. The consortium also reports progress to these reference groups, thus providing communities with the opportunity to hold partners to account and correct the ABP’s course.

Finally, the RSRTF’s efforts to localize impact measurement is helping its partners to collect highly contextualized monitoring and evaluation data. The RSRTF has pioneered the measuring safety and security (MSS) method in South Sudan. As explained earlier in this report, the MSS methodology allows partners to capture community perceptions of safety and security. This method effectively puts local stakeholders in a position to decide what indicators will be monitored throughout the programme to measure the ABP’s impact on peace and stability in the area. By applying the MSS, the Fund’s partners in CES were able to capture nuances in the different ways in which communities define safety and security across the four target counties. For example, while a major security concern in Kajo-Keji centered around the presence of armed cattle herders, local leaders in Morobo highlighted the dynamic migration patterns that place increased pressure on local resources and services.

Partners will build on these findings to further tailor their activities to the different contexts across the target counties. Together, these insights and the above-mentioned efforts to enhance ownership of the ABP at community, county, state and national levels will play a critical role in ‘localizing’ the RSRTF’s work in the area, ensuring the ABP will have a lasting impact.

Political Affairs Division (PAD)

27 political forums and workshop events were held



1,800 people participated in the forums and workshops

250 state-level executives were trained in constitution-making and roles in the implementation of the peace agreement

Through this initiative designed and implemented by UNMISS Political Affairs Division, the RSRTF has contributed to increased inclusivity of the political process in South Sudan by enhancing civic and political space and fostering trust and political cohesion to lay the foundations to support a peaceful political transition. Implemented at the national and subnational levels, the project targeted key stakeholders including women and youth, through workshops and political parties' forums, and newly elected state authorities, through various leadership retreats and dialogues.

The political parties' forums established and maintained a protected space for healthy debate among representatives from diverse political parties and other groupings. These were among the first opportunities in South Sudan for representatives from different political parties to present their views, as well as listen to others' views, in a non-adversarial setting.

The series of executive leadership retreats organized at state levels in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMAC) and UNMISS Civil Affairs Division (CAD), assisted the newly appointed state level parliamentarians to better appreciate the import of the Revitalized

Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) as well as their roles and responsibilities. These retreats were often the first time that executives from the different political spectrums, particularly between Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in Opposition (SPLM-IO), were convened in one space and offered a launch pad for discussion and shared appreciation of the political transition, and directly contributed to the development of state policies and programme priorities.

The project provided opportunity for a diverse group of stakeholders, including women and youth, to make meaningful inputs to the peace process. Their participation resulted in the adoption of resolutions, commitments and key actions to be undertaken during the transitional period. Some of the examples include:

- A draft roadmap for civil society organizations to guide their engagement in the constitution-making process and input into the formal process;
- Renewed commitment to ensure adequate youth representation in the permanent constitution-making process; and
- A signed commitment to support the establishment of a women's caucus

from among the executive across party lines, to advocate inclusion and active participation of women in the constitution-making process.

Working with a consortium of partners, the project supported the establishment and work of the South Sudan Women's Leadership Forum – a platform for women leaders from across grassroots, subnational and national levels to dialogue and build a common strategy to address factors hindering women's leadership in South Sudan. The South Sudan Women, Peace and Security Monitoring and Advocacy Group, created by the South Sudan Women Leadership Forum, advocates for women's participation in national and state-level political and governance discourse.

Similarly, the project supported youth involvement in the peace process. Youth representatives from across political parties signed a communiqué calling for action on various measures related to youth, including the passing of the Youth Development Policy and the implementation of the Youth Enterprise Fund. This was the first event in South Sudan bringing together youth representatives from different political parties to present and listen to common concerns.



EMPOWERING THE GRASSROOTS: LINKING THE NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL PROCESSES

This project empowers grassroots stakeholders and opinion leaders across South Sudan to broaden their space for engagement. It provides a platform to enhance grassroots participation in national peace implementation, bridge subnational and national processes, facilitate dialogue between local constituencies and their national leaders, and influence national policy on sustainable peace themes.

Strengthening grassroots participation in governance and peace processes remains crucial yet challenging across South Sudan. Issues of elite capture of the peace process, lack of political willingness to adhere to timelines and provisions stipulated in the R-ARCSS, inadequate resources for governance and security provision, and lack of awareness of the provisions of the agreement among the grassroots continue to inhibit local stakeholder participation in the peace process and limit leadership accountability to local constituencies. The formation of state governments in February 2021 addressed key governance issues emanating from leadership vacuums that had been created by delays in the appointment of state governors. Political party allegiances remain strong among government officials, however, resulting in political instability at the subnational level, and ineffective institutions of governance characterized by mistrust among stakeholders and restrictions on civic space.

Through this project, UNMISS Civil Affairs Division creates platforms to strengthen the subnational/national nexus. This is done through a two-pronged approach:

1. Connecting local stakeholders from all 10 states through grassroots forums at the national level; and
2. Facilitating dialogue between local stakeholders (including community leaders, civil society and youth groups), state

10 State-level
governors
forums

2 National
grassroots
forums

government officials and national cabinet members through governor's forums at the state and national levels.

In doing so, the project works in close coordination with a core group of partners, including CEPO, the Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies, Finn Church Aid, South Sudan Council of Churches, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNMISS and leading researchers and practitioners from Juba University.

In 2021, UNMISS Civil Affairs Division conducted two national level grassroots forums, Our Peace Forums VI and VII, in Juba, which were complemented by 10 feedback forums held at



the state level. These forums brought together grassroots stakeholders, especially women- and youth-led civil society organizations from across the country to discuss key challenges to inclusive peacebuilding and governance, and raise awareness of the aspirations of grassroots stakeholders to help achieve peace in South Sudan. By building strong civil society networks among these grassroots stakeholders, the project empowered them to articulate their needs and concerns, enabled sharing of best practices in enhancing their role in the national peace process, and increased visibility of local civil society-led peace efforts. These forums encouraged participants to serve as peace influencers within their respective communities to sensitize communities through peace messaging and campaigns. For instance, Our Peace Forum VI, held in Juba in May 2021 under the theme of ‘Youth and Nation Building’, brought together representatives of youth civil society organizations, unions and associations, as well as activists and artists to engage them to critically examine their role in the

implementation of the R-ARCSS, and to address challenges to their effective participation in governance and peace processes.

Similarly, Our Peace Forum VII in November 2021, brought together local artists from across the country in Juba to share their experiences on the role of art and culture in peacebuilding. The forum sought to influence the national peace agenda through art by encouraging participants to use their art to advance social cohesion and peace, develop synergies with other artists, and participate in political and civic space.

In addition to these grassroots forums, UNMISS Civil Affairs also organized a national peacebuilding ministers’ retreat, national governors forum, and nine state governors forums in Juba, Rumbek, Torit, Bor, Wau, Malakal, Kuajok, Aweil and Ruweng administrative areas to facilitate participatory discussions between national cabinet members, state government officials and local stakeholders. These forums helped

address divisive issues and orient coalition governments towards the implementation of the peace agreement, focusing on locally identified priorities at the state level. The participation of civil society actors, community leaders, women and youth was instrumental in identifying grassroots issues and peacebuilding needs of communities that require prioritization by state governments. Local stakeholders then developed consensus-based roadmaps and action plans to address these priorities in the short and medium term.

The state governors forums were also crucial in addressing emerging tensions between members of the newly formed coalition governments at the state level, as they aimed at promoting political cohesion, trust-building and collective action by state government officials in response to identified needs and priorities. For instance, in Lakes, issues of hierarchy and respect for authority between the governor and deputy governor, with a background of party politics, risked destabilizing state government operations in April 2021, just prior to the governor's forum. Timely intervention by UNMISS Civil Affairs and the core group, however, de-escalated tensions, as they engaged both sides and urged them to come together with other state government officials and local administration and move beyond party affiliations to build effective state institutions aimed at addressing local needs and priorities.

The state-level governors forums helped identify capacity gaps in governance structures at the grassroots level requiring follow-up actions and sustainable engagements, and ultimately led to the adoption of strategic frameworks identifying cross-sectoral priorities related to security, rule of law and good governance. The consolidated feedback then formed the basis for discussions at the national governors forum in Juba during 22–26 November 2021. Overall, the forums contributed to the opening of civic space within the governance and political discourse, allowing civil society actors, women and youth

leaders to interact with key national decision makers and influencers.

Contributing to RSRTF's key principles of increasing local focus and bridging silos, the forums contributed to increased coordination and engagement between local actors, civil society organizations, community leaders and government institutions. In Central Equatoria, for instance, the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Ministry of Peacebuilding coordinated with CEPO during the forum to ensure an inclusive locally owned process engaging NGOs and the United Nations Country Team to identify programming gaps and priorities, and streamline programmes according to local needs and priorities.

Under this project, UNMISS Civil Affairs organized a national peacebuilding ministers' retreat in Juba during 24–28 August 2021, launched by the First Vice President, Dr. Riek Machar Teny, and the Minister of Peacebuilding, Peter Par Kuol. Through CAD's various engagements with ministry officials and other stakeholders at the state level, challenges in the implementation of the peacebuilding provisions of the R-ARCSS and ambiguity on the mandate of the newly established Ministry of Peacebuilding were noted. By bringing together 80 participants from all 10 states and three administrative areas, including national and state peacebuilding ministers, director generals, chairpersons of the peace and reconciliation commissions, representatives of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development and community service organizations, the conference served as a platform for stakeholders to identify and address these challenges. It promoted political engagement between government officials from various parties to the peace agreement, who agreed to develop a national peacebuilding architecture, clearly defining the mandate of various peacebuilding institutions, and establishing a roadmap for priority peacebuilding actions to be undertaken to enable a successful political transition in South Sudan.



Focus areas of the communications strategy include the dissemination of the peace agreement, mainstreaming peace-building into the work of other line ministries and documenting local level peace agreements for public reference.

PROMOTING PEACE AND SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF COVID-19 IN JUBA, BENTIU AND WAU

The detection of the first COVID-19 case in South Sudan on 5 April 2020 raised great concern in the country and internationally. To control the spread of the pandemic, the South Sudanese Government issued travel restrictions, closed borders and banned international flights. United Nations agencies, UNMISS and NGOs took additional precautionary measures, with some reducing their staff footprint during the height of the pandemic. Throughout 2020 and 2021 it was feared that the pandemic could aggravate existing vulnerabilities in the country, including through negative socioeconomic shocks and adverse effects of responses to the pandemic that could exacerbate existing drivers of conflict. The South Sudanese economy strongly felt the knock-on effects of the pandemic in 2021 with the sharp decline in international oil prices.

While the pandemic caused delays in the roll-out of activities, all of the RSRTF's ABPs and thematic projects were able to adapt to and overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic. Partners found alternative and safe means to deliver their programmes. For example, where physical meetings were restricted, partners used mass media for their planned awareness-raising activities and shifted to virtual meetings where appropriate. By adopting a wide range of COVID-19 precautionary measures, RSRTF partners were able to continue their work in the communities, ensuring that their critical reconciliation, stabilization and resilience support to programme participants continued when needed most during the pandemic.

Beyond partners' adaptation to the pandemic, the RSRTF also launched a project dedicated to tackling the negative fallout of COVID-19. In a rapid response to the outbreak of the pandemic, the Fund's Steering Committee allocated US\$500,000 in August 2020 to IOM to implement the *Promoting Peace and Solidarity in the Face of COVID-19 in Juba, Bentiu and Wau* project, together with national NGOs, CEPO and Action for Conflict Resolution (ACR). The project aimed to prevent violence connected to

the spread of COVID-19, promote solidarity and tolerance, and enhance civic participation in pandemic-related decision-making processes. The project successfully concluded on 31 October 2021.

The project piloted an approach to reducing risk of abusing human rights in a health emergency through peacebuilding interventions, and in the process helped give voice to groups of people that would have been vulnerable to abuse and violations. IOM, CEPO and ACR were able to achieve a great deal in a short space of time and with a limited budget. A total of 133,502 South Sudanese were reached through continued and recurring awareness campaigns, training workshops and meetings, public works, and the repair of health facilities and handpumps (boreholes). Partners leveraged mass media to discuss the pandemic's relation to peacebuilding and to raise awareness around COVID-19-related regulations and prevention measures. They organized over 40 live radio talk shows reaching thousands of listeners and providing them with an opportunity to discuss the pandemic and the arising socioeconomic challenges. Partners also enhanced the capacity of 17 women- and youth-led community-based organizations

(CBOs) to actively engage their communities on COVID-19 awareness raising and promote community conflict prevention, reconciliation and solidarity in the face of the pandemic.

The ABP also provided platforms that CBOs and local community representatives could use to voice their concerns with respect to COVID-19 prevention and response efforts, including organizing meetings with government officials in Juba, Bentiu and Wau. These activities were complemented by small-scale health-care infrastructure projects chosen by the target communities with the goal of strengthening CBOs. Through small grants, the project

partners and CBOs were able to rehabilitate a community health clinic in Kabo village in Juba and extend the maternity ward in the Rubkona primary health-care centre, among other smaller infrastructure projects. The repair of handpumps helped supplement the available water sources and reduced pressure and congestion at the available handpumps that could have caused conflicts over water.

Community feedback from radio talk shows and community engagements indicates that some level of transformation in target communities' perception of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to take place. Instead

17 women- and youth-led community-based organizations **trained** and **supported** to actively engage in **COVID-19 awareness** raising and promote **community conflict prevention, reconciliation** and **solidarity** in the face of the pandemic



133,502 reached through **awareness campaigns**, training workshops, meetings and public works

40 **live radio talk shows** held on the pandemic and the arising socioeconomic challenges

300 **solar-powered radio sets** distributed to community members



3 **health clinics** rehabilitated



3 **boreholes** repaired

of stigma and hate speech, there are now indications that community perception towards those infected with the disease has softened and that there are more expressions of compassion to the infected and less stigma and condemnation. Also, there are indications of increased adherence to preventive measures such as mask wearing and practical hygiene measures at community and household levels.

Finally, the project also supported the Ministry of Peace Building in its communication efforts. IOM supported the ministry in defining its approach to communication including key focus areas and approaches to communication. Focus areas of the communications strategy include the dissemination of the peace agreement, mainstreaming peace-building into the work of other line ministries, and documenting local level peace agreements for public reference. This support to the ministry was premised on the goal to promote locally driven solutions to peacebuilding challenges that have a higher

chance to be sustainable and cost-effective. Importantly, the Ministry of Peace Building has also emphasized the importance of broadening the understanding of peacebuilding to include social dynamics around national health crises. Increased coordination with Ministry of Health on health emergencies and the need to mainstream peacebuilding messages through the Ministry of Health was proposed as an example of how the ministries could support overall peacebuilding coordination to jointly address conflict drivers.

While the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on South Sudan proved less severe than initially feared, the joint IOM-CEPO-ACR project contributed to keeping communities safe. Partners increased awareness of the pandemic and related prevention measures, promoted peaceful co-existence, combated stigmatization around COVID-19, and assisted local communities in their efforts to lobby for their health needs and concerns with government authorities.



SPOTLIGHT: EVALUATION AND LEARNING

2021 was a year of learning for the RSRTF. The Fund stepped up its efforts to capture 'good practices' and encourage knowledge exchange between its partners and wider stakeholders. These efforts started with the introduction of a dedicated RSRTF knowledge management strategy in early 2021. This strategy is embedded in the Fund's overall monitoring, evaluation and learning system. It aims to grow the evidence base for the Fund's programming, including to provide the Steering Committee with the data and evidence it needs to ensure the Fund meets its objectives. Given the Fund's pioneering role in the implementation of the 'new way of working' and 'triple nexus' agendas in South Sudan, the RSRTF seeks to document and exchange innovations and lessons learned through its evaluation and learning work streams.



Evaluation

The RSRTF is committed to learn from its experience in implementing 'whole-of-system' violence-reduction programmes in South Sudan. A critical foundation for this learning is the independent evaluation of the Fund's approach and initiatives. As previously mentioned in this report, the RSRTF commissioned an independent early-stage evaluation to test the RSRTF's approach in 2021. In addition, the Fund's partners in Koch County, Unity State, commissioned an end-of-programme evaluation of the first phase of their ABP (2019–2021).



Encouragingly, this evaluation found that the ABP has likely contributed to the stabilization of Koch County in recent years, by establishing local peace committees, supporting traditional chief's courts, and generating peace dividends through village saving groups and agricultural activities. The evaluation also pointed out some of the ABP's shortcomings, including the partly disjointed nature of the programme's reconciliation, stabilization and resilience activities. Among other things, the evaluators recommended enhancing synergies,

Top: Charlotte Ashley, RSRTF Fund Manager, welcoming the participants of the RSRTF annual cross-partner learning workshop at Palm Africa Hotel, Juba, on 21 and 22 June 2021. Below: One of the implementing partner participants.

consolidating gains made to date, and expanding the programme to accommodate conflict systems that cross into neighbouring counties. The evaluation's findings and recommendations provided invaluable reflections for future planning and directly fed into the planning for the ABP's second phase.

Looking ahead to 2022, the RSRTF and its partners will conduct evaluations on the first phases of the WBeG-Warrap and Jonglei/GPAA ABPs as well as the Fund's approach to thematic grant funding. Through these evaluations, the Fund hopes to generate lessons learned and practical recommendations that will help ensure that its initiatives are impactful and sustainable.

Learning

Apart from conducting dedicated evaluations, the RSRTF also encourages its partners to critically reflect on their challenges and achievements on a regular basis, including through their reporting to the Fund. In addition, to further institutionalize learning, the RSRTF, for the first time, held a cross-partner learning workshop in 2021.

The workshop provided partners with a highly welcomed platform to discuss the Fund's approach, and exchanged lessons learned. It brought together representatives of each of the Fund's six area-based and thematic programmes, members of the RSRTF Steering Committee, and strategic partners, such as the Under Secretary for Peacebuilding from the South Sudan Ministry of Peacebuilding, two UNMISS Heads of Field Offices, as well as representatives of the World Bank, the United Kingdom Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund and the US *Shejeh Salam* programme.

During the two days of the workshop, the Fund's partners shared lessons they had learned during implementation to date, stimulating discussions on a wide range of topics. Discussions centred on the RSRTF's area-based programming approach and comparative advantages, ABP design and implementation, area reference groups and coordination, local ownership and

sustainability, partners' adaptation to COVID-19, and the Fund's thematic funding window. The workshop offered the RSRTF and its partners fresh insights, food for thought, and practical recommendations on how to make the Fund future-proof and relevant to South Sudan's evolving context. Recommendations included:

- Enhancing political engagement in support of the ABPs;
- Involving more South Sudanese partners in the Fund's work;
- Strengthening cross-partner accountability and integrating 'triple nexus' programming;
- Placing greater emphasis on governance, security, policing and justice programming; and
- Reviewing the Fund's approach to thematic funding.

Given the success and overwhelmingly positive feedback by the participants, the Fund will now hold this learning event on an annual basis.

Finally, in 2021, the RSRTF continued engaging external partners, both within South Sudan and internationally, to learn from other initiatives and ensure the Fund keeps abreast of the newest research findings. In April 2021, for example, the Fund Secretariat attended the annual learning workshop of the Partnership for Recovery and Resilience (PfRR) to glean insights into the PfRR's experience and challenges in implementing the area-based programming approach. Throughout 2021, the Secretariat offered the opportunity for researchers to participate in interviews and reflect on the Fund's approach and lessons learned. The Secretariat and its partners also provided feedback on studies on the implementation of the 'triple nexus' and other topics, including those conducted by the Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility in South Sudan. By drawing on the cutting-edge of research in the fields of reconciliation, stabilization and resilience in its work, the Secretariat also ensured relevant findings were taken up in the Fund's strategic planning processes and partners' operations.

The RSRTF has set itself a number of priorities for 2022, including the consolidation of gains made to date, potential transitioning or 'phasing out' of RSRTF programmes, the responsible expansion of the Fund's portfolio, and a range of other institutional and programmatic priorities.

Consolidation and transitioning

The Fund is committed to safeguard investments and only exit from target areas responsibly when actions may be sustainable. Recognizing that achieving meaningful contributions to peace takes time, the Fund commits itself to ensure intentional and considered support to maximize the potential for delivering durable impact in terms of addressing root causes of violence. In some locations, short-term interventions may not allow the Fund to realize its desired impact, given the time required for conflict transformation to take hold. The Fund allocations are therefore geared towards strategic prioritization, refinement and

consolidation of existing initiatives over expansion of the portfolio to new locations. The Fund's Steering Committee will review the merit of follow-on programme phases on a case-by-case basis.

At the same time, South Sudan's fluid context results in changeable hotspots and therefore high demand and evolving priorities for application of the risk-tolerant RSRTF model of nexus programming. To ensure adequate agility to adapt and respond, the Fund also looks to leverage initial investments in a catalytic manner wherever feasible. In some areas targeted by the Fund, initial investments may provide a sufficient contribution to reduce and mitigate immediate contextual risks and lay the groundwork for broader engagement by other actors. This allows the Fund to conclude its engagement responsibly, having been an effective precursor to more sustained programming efforts that consolidate peace and deliver development goals.

To determine whether target areas are 'ripe' for an exit by the RSRTF, the Fund Secretariat will gather information in 2022 that will inform decision-making regarding future engagement following the planned completion of the Fund's ABPs in the Western Bahr el Ghazal/Warrap border area as well as Jonglei and the GPAA. In addition to commissioning independent end-of-programme evaluations, the Fund Secretariat will conduct assessments to understand whether the context has changed sufficiently for the RSRTF's exit from the area and/or whether other actions are in place that would alleviate the requirement for further RSRTF financing.

At the same time, South Sudan's fluid context results in changeable hotspots and therefore high demand and evolving priorities for application of the risk-tolerant RSRTF model of nexus programming.

In addition, the RSRTF will work to strengthen ongoing ABPs by plugging programmatic gaps identified by participating communities and implementing partners. The Fund plans to use its thematic grant funding modality to provide supplementary funding for discreet actions, without which the ABPs' impact and sustainability would be threatened.

Responsible expansion

Apart from consolidating existing programming, the RSRTF will also seek to expand its portfolio in 2022. Given the continuation of subnational violence and an increasing recognition of the RSRTF's potential to reduce violence in conflict hotspots in the country, the demand for the RSRTF is anticipated to be substantial in 2022. The Fund will strike a balance between portfolio expansion and the above-mentioned efforts to consolidate and protect stability gains in current target areas.

The Fund's Steering Committee will apply the Fund's five geographic targeting criteria⁸ in selecting new candidate areas for RSRTF programming, ensuring that the Fund maintains

As previously mentioned in this report, the RSRTF will also conduct an evaluation of its approach to thematic funding in 2022.

its sharp focus on violence reduction in the most fragile and marginalized areas of South Sudan.

As previously mentioned in this report, the RSRTF will also conduct an evaluation of its approach to thematic funding in 2022. This evaluation will provide the necessary evidence to inform the Fund Steering Committee's strategic decision-making on how best to leverage thematic grant funding in support of the RSRTF's goals going ahead.

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES

In 2022, the RSRTF additionally sets out to:

- Strengthen coordination with other initiatives, including other major reconciliation, stabilization and resilience programmes and 'triple nexus' working groups.
- Implement management response to the 2021 early-stage evaluation.
- Enhance localization, including by developing a localization strategy that will outline steps to strengthening the Fund's local ownership.
- Review the Fund's approach to evaluations to ensure focus on impact and sustainability.
- Continue refining impact measurements, including by facilitating partner discussions on monitoring and evaluation and by rolling out the 'measuring safety and security' (MSS) step-by-step guide developed in 2021.
- Enhance communications, increasing the RSRTF's visibility and strategic communication activities.
- Participate in global forums and learning events to share lessons and good practices from the RSRTF on integrative financing and operationalising the nexus.
- Mobilize additional resources, attracting new donors to the Fund and increasing the predictability of income for improved forward planning.

⁸ In determining potential candidate areas for Area Based Programmes the Fund is guided by the following geographic targeting criteria: levels of violence; potential fault lines between communities; access and availability of implementers in the area; level of marginalization; feasibility; and conflict sensitivity.



Introduction

This Consolidated Annual Financial Report of the South Sudan RSRTF is prepared by the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) in fulfilment of its obligations as administrative agent, as per the terms of reference of the memorandum of understanding signed between the MPTF Office and the participating organizations, and the standard administrative arrangement signed with contributors.

The MPTF Office, as administrative agent, is responsible for concluding a memorandum of understanding with participating organizations and standard administrative arrangements with contributors. It receives, administers and manages contributions, and disburses these

funds to the participating organizations. The administrative agent prepares and submits annual consolidated financial reports, as well as regular financial statements for transmission to stakeholders.

This section presents financial data and analysis of the South Sudan RSRTF using the pass-through funding modality as of 31 December 2021 and covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2021. Financial information for the Fund is also available on the MPTF Office Gateway, at the following address: <https://beta.mptf.undp.org/fund/ssr00>.

The financial data in the report are recorded in United States dollars. Due to rounding off of numbers, the totals may not add up exactly.

Sources and uses of funds

As of 31 December 2021, six contributors deposited US\$61,235,619, and US\$396,484 was earned in interest. The cumulative source of funds was US\$61,632,103.

Of this amount, US\$45,769,221 has been net funded to nine participating organizations, of which US\$19,518,407 has been reported as expenditure. The administrative agent fee has been charged at the approved rate of 1 percent on deposits, and amounts to US\$612,356. Table 5 provides an overview of the overall sources, uses and balance of the South Sudan RSRTF as of 31 December 2021.

US\$45,769,221 has been net funded to nine participating organizations, of which US\$19,518,407 has been reported as expenditure.

Table 5: Financial overview, as of 31 December 2021 (in US\$)

	ANNUAL 2020	ANNUAL 2021	CUMULATIVE
SOURCES OF FUNDS			
Contributions from donors	19,307,692	21,833,989	61,235,619
Sub-total contributions	19,307,692	21,833,989	61,235,619
Fund earned interest and investment income	135,388	58,757	396,484
TOTAL: SOURCES OF FUNDS	19,443,079	21,892,746	61,632,103
USE OF FUNDS			
Transfers to participating organizations	1,000,000	32,039,181	44,250,543
Net funded amount	1,000,000	32,039,181	44,250,543
Administrative agent fees	193,077	218,340	612,356
Direct costs	403,490	597,265	1,518,678
Bank charges	410	369	1,046
TOTAL: USES OF FUNDS	1,596,976	32,855,154	46,382,623
Change in fund cash balance with Administrative Agent	17,846,103	(10,962,408)	15,249,480
Opening fund balance (1 January)	8,365,785	26,211,888	
Closing fund balance (31 December)	26,211,888	15,249,480	15,249,480
Net funded amount (includes direct cost)	1,403,490	32,636,446	45,769,221
Participating organizations' expenditure (includes direct cost)	5,199,762	13,313,781	19,518,407
BALANCE OF FUNDS WITH PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS	(3,796,272)	19,322,665	26,250,814

Partner contributions

Table 6 provides information on cumulative contributions received from all contributors to this fund as of 31 December 2021.

The South Sudan RSRTF is currently being financed by six contributors, as listed in the table. The table includes financial commitments made by the contributors through signed standard administrative agreements with an anticipated deposit date as per the schedule of payments by 31 December 2021 and deposits received by the same date. It does not include commitments that were made to the fund beyond 2021.

Interest earned

Interest income is earned in two ways: 1) on the balance of funds held by the administrative agent (fund earned interest); and 2) on the balance of funds held by the participating organizations (agency earned interest) where

their financial regulations and rules allow return of interest to the administrative agent.

As of 31 December 2021, fund earned interest amounts to US\$396,484.

No interest has been received from participating organizations. The cumulative interest received is US\$396,484. Details are provided in Table 7.

Transfer of funds

Allocations to participating organizations are approved by the Steering Committee and disbursed by the administrative agent. As of 31 December 2021, the administrative agent has transferred US\$44,250,543 to eight participating organizations (see list below).

Table 8 provides additional information on the refunds received by the MPTF Office, and the net funded amount for each of the participating organizations.

Table 6: Contributions, as of 31 December 2021 (in US\$)

CONTRIBUTORS	TOTAL COMMITMENTS	PRIOR YEARS AS OF 31 DEC 2020 DEPOSITS	CURRENT YEAR JAN–DEC 2021 DEPOSITS	TOTAL DEPOSITS
Former – Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada	1,386,957	–	1,386,957	1,386,957
Government of Germany	18,215,659	14,839,417	3,376,242	18,215,659
Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	2,200,000	–	2,200,000	2,200,000
Government of The Netherlands	10,000,000	3,370,786	3,370,786	6,741,572
Government of Norway	19,064,847	13,076,823	5,988,024	19,064,847
Swedish International Development Cooperation	13,626,584	8,114,604	5,511,980	13,626,584
GRAND TOTAL	64,494,047	39,401,630	21,833,989	61,235,619

Table 7: Sources of interest and investment income as of 31 December 2021 (in US\$)

INTEREST EARNED	PRIOR YEARS AS OF 31 DEC 2020	CURRENT YEAR JAN–DEC 2021	TOTAL
ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT			
Fund earned interest and investment income	337,727	58,757	396,484
Total: Fund earned interest	337,727	58,757	396,484
PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS			
Total: Agency earned interest			
GRAND TOTAL	337,727	58,757	396,484

Table 8: Transfer, refund, and net funded amount by participating organization (in US\$)

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	PRIOR YEARS AS OF 31 DEC 2020			CURRENT YEAR JAN-DEC 2021			TOTAL		
	TRANSFERS	RE-FUNDS	NET FUNDED	TRANSFERS	RE-FUNDS	NET FUNDED	TRANSFERS	RE-FUNDS	NET FUNDED
FAO	3,500,000	–	3,500,000		–		3,500,000	–	3,500,000
IOM	2,000,000	–	2,000,000	11,102,000	–	11,102,000	13,102,000	–	13,102,000
NGO/UNDP	5,581,560	–	5,581,560		–		5,581,560	–	5,581,560
UNDP		–		9,616,255	–	9,616,255	9,616,255	–	9,616,255
UNHCR		–		1,569,284	–	1,569,284	1,569,284	–	1,569,284
UNICEF		–		898,000	–	898,000	898,000	–	898,000
UNMISS	1,129,802	–	1,129,802	1,935,829	–	1,935,829	3,065,631	–	3,065,631
WFP		–		6,220,148	–	6,220,148	6,220,148	–	6,220,148
WHO		–		697,665	–	697,665	697,665	–	697,665
GRAND TOTAL	12,211,362	–	12,211,362	32,039,181	–	32,039,181	44,250,543	–	44,250,543

Expenditure and financial delivery rates

All final expenditures reported are submitted as certified financial information by the headquarters of the participating organizations. These were consolidated by the MPTF Office.

Joint programme/project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each participating organization, and are reported to the administrative agent as per the agreed upon categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. The expenditures are reported via the MPTF Office's online expenditure reporting tool. The 2021 expenditure data has been posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY at <https://beta.mptf.undp.org/fund/ssr00>.

Expenditure reported by participating organization

In 2021, US\$32,039,181 was net funded to participating organizations, and US\$12,642,711 was reported in expenditure.

As shown in Table 9a, the cumulative net funded amount is US\$44,250,543, and cumulative expenditures reported by the participating organizations amount to US\$18,242,910. This equates to an overall Fund expenditure delivery rate of 41.23 percent.

Expenditure reported by category

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each participating organization and are reported as per the agreed categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. In 2006, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) established six categories against which United Nations entities must report inter-agency project expenditures. Effective 1 January 2012, the United Nations Chief Executive Board modified these categories as a result of International Public Sector Accounting Standards adoption to comprise eight categories. See Table 9b.

Table 9a: Net funded amount and reported expenditures by participating organization, as of 31 December 2021 (in US\$)

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	APPROVED AMOUNT	NET FUNDED AMOUNT	EXPENDITURE			DELIVERY RATE %
			PRIOR YEARS AS OF 31 DEC 2020	CURRENT YEAR JAN–DEC 2021	CUMULATIVE	
FAO	3,500,000	3,500,000	1,039,121	1,732,936	2,772,057	79.20
IOM	13,102,000	13,102,000	463,404	2,035,547	2,498,951	19.07
NGO/UNDP	5,581,560	5,581,560	3,804,957	1,636,820	5,441,777	97.50
UNDP	9,616,255	9,616,255	–	373,073	373,073	3.88
UNHCR	1,569,284	1,569,284	–	829,794	829,794	52.88
UNICEF	898,000	898,000	–	322,956	322,956	35.96
UNMISS	3,065,631	3,065,631	292,717	1,027,842	1,320,559	43.08
WFP	6,220,148	6,220,148	–	4,245,057	4,245,057	68.25
WHO	697,665	697,665	–	438,688	438,688	62.88
GRAND TOTAL	44,250,543	44,250,543	5,600,199	12,642,711	18,242,910	41.23

Table 9b: Expenditure by UNSDG budget category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US\$)

CATEGORY	EXPENDITURE			% OF TOTAL PROGRAMME COST
	PRIOR YEARS AS OF 31 DEC 2020	CURRENT YEAR JAN–DEC 2021	TOTAL	
Staff and personnel cost	578,910	1,964,127	2,543,037	14.90
Supplies, commodities and materials	264,209	2,230,743	2,494,952	14.62
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	483	133,713	134,196	0.79
Contractual services expenses	2,313,961	2,766,075	5,080,037	29.76
Travel	105,206	448,211	553,417	3.24
Transfers and grants	1,662,985	3,124,772	4,787,757	28.05
General operating	303,843	1,170,290	1,474,133	8.64
Programme costs total	5,229,597	11,837,931	17,067,528	100.00
Indirect support costs total ⁹	370,602	804,780	1,175,382	6.89
GRAND TOTAL	5,600,199	12,642,711	18,242,910	

⁹ Indirect support costs charged by participating organization, based on their financial regulations, can be deducted upfront or at a later stage during implementation. The percentage may therefore appear to exceed the 7 percent agreed upon for ongoing projects. Once projects are financially closed, this number is not to exceed 7 percent.

Cost recovery

Cost recovery policies for the Fund are guided by the applicable provisions of the terms of reference, the memorandum of agreement concluded between the administrative agent and participating organizations, and the standard administrative arrangements concluded between the administrative agent and contributors, based on rates approved by UNDG.

The policies in place, as of 31 December 2021, were as follows:

- **The administrative agent fee:** 1 percent is charged at the time of contributor deposit and covers services provided on that contribution for the entire duration of the Fund. In the reporting period US\$218,340 was deducted in administrative agent fees. Cumulatively, as of 31 December 2021, US\$612,356 has been charged in administrative agent-fees.
- **Indirect costs of participating organizations:** Participating organizations may charge 7 percent indirect costs. In the current reporting period US\$804,780 was deducted in indirect costs by participating organizations. Cumulatively, indirect costs amount to US\$1,175,382 as of 31 December 2021.

Accountability and transparency

In order to effectively provide fund administration services and facilitate monitoring and reporting to the United Nations system and its partners, the MPTF Office has developed a public website, the MPTF Office Gateway (<https://mptf.undp.org>).

Refreshed in real time every two hours from an internal enterprise resource planning system, the MPTF Office Gateway has become a standard setter for providing transparent and accountable trust fund administration services.

The Gateway provides financial information including: contributor commitments and deposits, approved programme budgets, transfers to and expenditures reported by participating organizations, interest income and other expenses. In addition, the Gateway provides an overview of the MPTF Office portfolio and extensive information on individual funds, including their purpose, governance structure and key documents. By providing easy access to the growing number of narrative and financial reports, as well as related project documents, the Gateway collects and preserves important institutional knowledge and facilitates knowledge sharing and management among United Nations organizations and their development partners, thereby contributing to United Nations coherence and development effectiveness.

Direct costs

The Fund governance mechanism may approve an allocation to a participating organization to cover costs associated with Fund coordination covering overall coordination, and fund level reviews and evaluations. These allocations are referred to as 'direct costs'. In the reporting period, direct costs charged to the fund amounted to US\$597,265. Cumulatively, as of 31 December 2021, US\$1,518,678 has been charged as direct costs.

Table 10: Direct costs

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	CURRENT YEAR NET FUNDED AMOUNT	CURRENT YEAR EXPENDITURE	TOTAL NET FUNDED AMOUNT	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
UNDP	597,265	671,069	1,518,678	1,275,496
TOTAL	597,265	671,069	1,518,678	1,275,496

ANNEX: EXPENDITURE BY PROJECT WITHIN SECTOR

Annex 1 displays the net funded amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by sector by project/joint programme and participating organization.

Table 11: Expenditure by project within sector (amounts in US\$)

CLUSTER/PROJECT NO. AND PROJECT TITLE	PARTICIPAT- ING ORGAN- IZATION	PROJECT STATUS	TOTAL APPROVED AMOUNT	NET FUNDED AMOUNT EXPENDITURE	TOTAL	DELIVERY RATE %
RECONCILIATION						
00125498 Reducing Violence and Intercommunal Conflict in Jonglei State and GPAA	UNHCR	Ongoing	1,569,284	1,569,284	829,794	52.88
RECONCILIATION: TOTAL			1,569,284	1,569,284	829,794	52.88
RESILIENCE						
00125496 Providing Access to Quality Learning through Secondary School Education and Functional Adult Literacy in Jonglei and GPAA	IOM	Ongoing	802,000	802,000	680,287	84.82
00125496 Providing Access to Quality Learning through Secondary School Education and Functional Adult Literacy in Jonglei and GPAA	UNICEF	Ongoing	898,000	898,000	322,956	35.96
RESILIENCE: TOTAL			1,700,000	1,700,000	1,003,243	59.01
RECONCILIATION, STABILIZATION, RESILIENCE						
00117636 Restoring Peaceful Coexistence for Better Livelihoods in Koch	NGO/UNDP	Ongoing	5,581,560	5,581,560	5,441,777	97.50
00119273 Mitigating Cattle-Related Violence in the Tri-State Border Areas of Tonj, Gogrial, and Wau	FAO	Ongoing	3,500,000	3,500,000	2,772,057	79.20
00119273 Mitigating Cattle-Related Violence in the Tri-State Border Areas of Tonj, Gogrial, and Wau	IOM	Ongoing	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,101,819	73.45

CLUSTER/PROJECT NO. AND PROJECT TITLE		PARTICIPAT- ING ORGAN- IZATION	PROJECT STATUS	TOTAL APPROVED AMOUNT	NET FUNDED AMOUNT EXPENDITURE	TOTAL	DELIVERY RATE %
00119364	Empowering the Grassroots: Linking the National and Subnational Processes	UNMISS	Ongoing	629,802	629,802	469,631	74.57
00120689	Targeted Support to Peace Implementation: Enhancing Political and Civic Space	UNMISS	Ongoing	500,000	500,000	495,550	99.11
00123084	Promoting Peace and Solidarity in the Face of COVID-19 in Juba, Bentiu and Wau	IOM	Ongoing	500,000	500,000	500,000	100.00
00125495	Community Violence Reduction in Central-southern Jonglei and GPAA	UNMISS	Ongoing	1,111,911	1,111,911	355,378	31.96
00125495	Community Violence Reduction in Central-southern Jonglei and GPAA	WFP	Ongoing	6,220,148	6,220,148	4,245,057	68.25
00125495	Community Violence Reduction in Central-southern Jonglei and GPAA	WHO	Ongoing	697,665	697,665	438,688	62.88
00128842	Locally Driven Solutions for Social Cohesion and Promoting Early Recovery in the Country's Former Breadbasket	IOM	Ongoing	10,300,000	10,300,000	216,845	2.11
00129524	Restoring Peaceful Coexistence for Better Livelihoods in Koch Country Phase II	UNDP	Ongoing	8,419,024	8,419,024	0	0.00
00129524	Restoring Peaceful Coexistence for Better Livelihoods in Koch Country Phase II	UNMISS	Ongoing	823,918	823,918	0	0.00
RECONCILIATION, STABILIZATION, RESILIENCE: TOTAL				39,784,028	39,784,028	16,036,801	40.31
STABILIZATION							
00125497	Community Security for the Most Vulnerable Groups in Jonglei State and GPAA	UNDP	Ongoing	1,197,231	1,197,231	373,073	31.16
Stabilization: Total				1,197,231	1,197,231	373,073	31.16
GRAND TOTAL				44,250,543	44,250,543	18,242,910	41.23

DEFINITIONS

Allocation

Amount approved by the Steering Committee for a project/programme.

Approved project/programme

A project/programme including budget, etc., that is approved by the Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.

Contributor commitment

Amount(s) committed by a contributor to a Fund in a signed standard administrative arrangement with the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the administrative agent. A commitment may be paid or pending payment.

Contributor deposit

Cash deposit received by the MPTF Office for the Fund from a contributor in accordance with a signed standard administrative arrangement.

Delivery rate

The percentage of funds that have been utilized, calculated by comparing expenditures reported by a participating organization against the 'net funded amount'. This does not include expense commitments by participating organization.

Indirect support costs

A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the participating organizations. UNSDG policy establishes a fixed indirect cost rate of 7 percent of programmable costs for inter-agency pass-through MPTFs.

Net funded amount

Amount transferred to a participating organization less any refunds transferred

back to the MPTF Office by a participating organization.

Participating organization

A UN organization or other inter-governmental organization that is a partner in a fund, as represented by signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the MPTF Office for a particular fund.

Project expenditure

The sum of expenses and/or expenditure reported by all participating organizations for a fund irrespective of which basis of accounting each participating organization follows for donor reporting.

Project financial closure

A project or programme is considered financially closed when all financial obligations of an operationally completed project or programme have been settled, and no further financial charges may be incurred.

Project operational closure

A project or programme is considered operationally closed when all programmatic activities for which participating organization(s) received funding have been completed.

Project start date

Project/joint programme start date as per the programmatic document.

Total approved budget

This represents the cumulative amount of allocations approved by the Steering Committee.

US\$ amount

The financial data in the report is recorded in United States dollars.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABP	area-based programme	PTR	Protection, Transition and Reintegration
ACR	Action for Conflict Resolution		
ARG	area reference group	R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan
CAD	Civil Affairs Division		
CBO	community-based organization	RoLAS	Rule of Law Advisory Section
CEPO	Community Empowerment for Progress Organization	RSRTF	Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund
CES	Central Equatoria State	R-TGoNU	Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity
DRC	Danish Refugee Council		
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	SPEDP	Support for Peace and Education Development Programme
FCA	Finn Church Aid	SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
GPAA	Greater Pibor Administrative Area	SPLA-Io	Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition
HDP	humanitarian, development and peace	TGW	Thematic Grants Window
HRD	Human Rights Division	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ICCCSM	Interstate Coordinating Committee on Cattle Seasonal Movement	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
IOM	International Organization for Migration	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
JCC	justice and confidence centres	UNIDOR	Universal Intervention and Development Organization
JSMC	joint special mobile court	UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
MBA	Marial Bai Agreement	UNPOL	United Nations Police
MC	Mercy Corps	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund	VSF-G	Vétérinaires Sans Frontières – Germany
MSS	measuring safety and security	WFP	World Food Programme
NGO	non-governmental organization	WHO	World Health Organization
NP	Nonviolent Peaceforce	WR	World Relief
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights	WV	World Vision
PAD	Political Affairs Division		
PfRR	Partnership for Recovery and Resilience		
POF	Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund		



2021 Annual Report: United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience in South Sudan

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